FRANZ LISZT

THE GIPSY IN MUSIC

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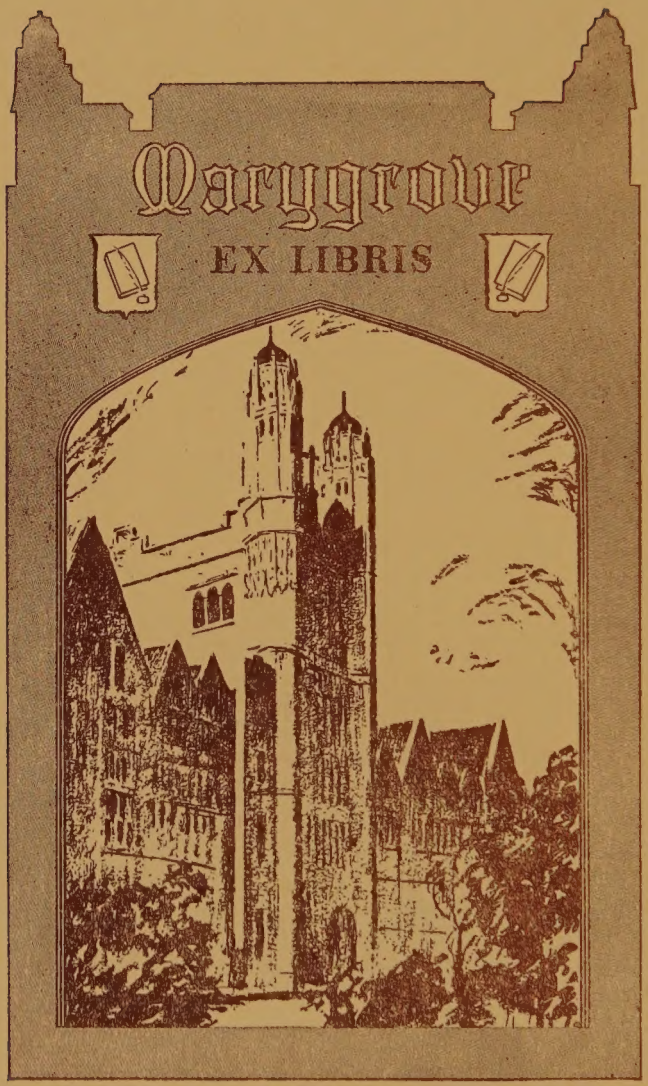
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FRANZ LISZT.

THE

GIPSY IN MUSIC

BY

FRANZ LISZT

The result of the Author's Life-long Experiences
and Investigations of the Gipsies and their Music

ENGLISHED FOR THE FIRST TIME BY

EDWIN EVANS

Preceded by an Essay on Liszt and his Work

GIPSY AND JEW, TWO WANDERING RACES
GIPSY LIFE IN RELATION TO ART
GIPSY MUSIC AND MUSICIANS

WITH SEVEN PORTRAITS.

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOLUME I.

WILLIAM REEVES
BOOKSELLER LIMITED

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FRANZ LISZT. B., Raiding, Hungary, October 22, 1811, d., July 31, 1886.

LIST OF PORTRAITS.

VOL. I.

VOL. II.

"RHAPSODIES HONGROISES."

Composed 1851-1854.

The full list of Liszt's compositions is to be found in the "Thematisches Verzeichniss," published by Breitkopf. The famous "Rhapsodies Hongroises," the initial basis upon which the present work was formulated, are fifteen in number, as follows:

No. 1. E.
,, 2. C Sharp.
,, 3. B Flat.
,, 4. E Flat.
,, 5. E Minor.
,, 6. D Flat.
,, 7. D Minor.
,, 8. "Capriccio," F Sharp Minor.
No. 9. E Flat "Carneval de Pesth."
,, 10. Preludio.
,, 11. A Minor.
,, 12. C Sharp Minor.
,, 13. A Minor.
,, 14. F Minor.
,, 15. "Rakoczy March."

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Part II.

Gipsy Life in Relation to Art.

PART III.

Gipsy Music and Musicians.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is natural to suppose that the reader's first interest will lie in a knowledge of the origin of the present work. We will therefore risk a temporary departure from the natural order of events in order to impart this, before going on to introduce Liszt with special reference to his pre-eminent qualifications as a writer upon Gipsy music.

When the widely-renowned "Rhapsodies Hongroises" by Liszt first appeared, they were, as he tells us, cast upon the world to hazard their fate. In other words, they were obliged to appear without the slightest explanation—either of what they meant, or of the intention behind so singular a venture. The strangeness of the music had, however, not unnaturally caused Liszt to think some elucidation to be necessary; for, otherwise, how was it likely that the public would condescend to accept it with an indulgence only possible to result from complete knowledge of its origin?

We, who understand Liszt's warmth of character, can readily imagine him at this juncture setting lovingly to work upon an elaborate explanation; so lovingly, in fact, that the explanation was not half finished when the Rhapsodies had to appear.

Here was clearly a case in which enthusiasm had defeated its own object. Fortunately, however, and quite contrary to Liszt's expectations, the public, far from being mystified, accepted these compositions with acclamation, no one even suggesting the necessity of any comment; so that the overgrown preface remained on hand, and what Liszt calls his "letter of recommendation" appeared, as it were, "unknown" at its address.

But, besides the good fortune of finding the Rhapsodies so readily accepted, there was also the opportunity of still further

elaborating what may now be called the Gipsy treatise. Obviously, since the "letter of recommendation" was no longer wanted, time might be taken to complete it. Moreover, the necessity for brevity had also disappeared. Care and reflection might now be applied, in order to give to the work a completeness and importance to which it could not have aspired had its original purpose been fulfilled. This is precisely what has been done; with the result of the work before us.

The necessity for this work by no means really disappeared with the favourable reception of the Rhapsodies themselves. A success which relates to the merely sensuous effect of the music, and which leaves out of account all serious intention of the composer, may be satisfactory enough to the mere money-getter; but, from the pioneer's point of view, it leaves the artistic question precisely where it was. Liszt's fundamental idea in the production of these Rhapsodies was not the mere issue of so many pieces, but the creation of a Bohemian epic. It was to be an epic, too, of singular denomination; for, unlike all which had gone before, it was to be of *instrumental* character, although adhering in its form to the features of the heroic poem. Thus, the separate compactness of each Rhapsody was not to interfere with its acceptance as a "canto" of the poem; and so forth. The reader will here easily perceive that the book itself must be referred to in order to gather the full harvest of Liszt's ideas.

This leaves us free to pass on to treat of Liszt's special qualifications for dealing with the Gipsy subject; not the least of which consists of his life-long experience of the Gipsy world. Born in a Hungarian village in 1811, he tells us that his remembrance of Gipsies is intertwined with that of his earliest childhood, and identified with the keenest impressions of his existence. We may well believe that it was *music* which first provided the incentive to all this friendship; knowing as we do how vivid was the charm exercised upon him by Gipsy melody from a very tender age, and how, as he himself tells us, he was in the habit of questioning everybody in the hope of having it explained. Nobody, however, could give him the least satisfaction; and his childish desire still remained unsatisfied when, by the assistance of Counts Amadé and Szapary, he was enabled to go to Vienna to study under Czerny and Salieri.

Eighteen months of hard work followed; after which came

the journey to Paris, for the purpose of further study. Here, at the Conservatoire, he was declined by Cherubini, on the ground of being a foreigner, but that made very little difference to the ardent youngster, who, after finding occasion to play to the Duc d'Orléans, succeeded in a very short time in becoming a pet of the Paris public.

Any supposition of the Gipsy feeling having become dulled by the interval just described is at once set at rest by the incidents which attended his first return visit to Hungary; when, as he tells us, he "longed" to hear those rhythms and harmonies once more, which, however intolerable in the sight of European art, were *real music*. Nothing would satisfy him short of going out to the Gipsy camp to speak to the chiefs and sleep as they do under the blue sky.

But the warmth was not altogether on the side of Liszt, for the Gipsies themselves evidently felt that they could scarcely make too much of him. The detail of his reception can be easily ascertained from the book itself; the whole circumstance being here mentioned merely for the purpose of assuring the reader of the steadfastness of Liszt's feeling in favour of Gipsy music.

Had any inroad upon that steadfastness been possible the important changes in Liszt's career afforded many greater opportunities of effecting it than that provided by the Vienna and Paris sojourn. To mention only a few relating to this period, there were the two visits to England; his unsuccessful opera, "Don Sancho," and a turn in Switzerland. More serious than any of these, there was the third visit to England, when he became so ill that his father was obliged to remove him to Boulogne; upon which the father himself was seized, and died suddenly. This was in 1827, at a time therefore when Liszt was ill-prepared either for the shock or for the responsibility which it suddenly cast upon him. Nothing daunted, he supported his mother in Paris by teaching, and was shortly bold enough to appear in that city with Beethoven's E flat Concerto. Not only the work itself was unknown, but Beethoven himself was then little more than a name; this being in 1828. The bearing of these facts upon our immediate subject is that they prove the earnestness of Liszt's character. Amusing instances of the same trait might also be found in his sudden affection for one of his pupils (daughter of the Minister

of the Interior) as well as in his impetuosity in favour of the objects of the July revolution. True to his habit of translating sympathy into action he honoured the latter with a "Revolutionary Symphony"; which, however, was never published, but the mention of which will serve to show that in his devotion to Gipsy music he was but following dominant instincts of his nature.

We have now arrived at the year 1831, when Liszt, although widely recognised as of great talent, had still not acquired, or even aspired to, the unique position which he afterwards attained. The power of forming a lasting determination was now however powerfully exemplified on the occasion of his attending a concert given by Paganini, when he became so electrified by the performance that he at once resolved to become the equal on the piano of Paganini upon the violin. His idea was to acquire the same technical proficiency as Paganini; but not for the purpose of using it for personal display, as Paganini had done, but in subserviency to artistic purposes. No resolution was ever more faithfully kept, so that here again we have proof of the constancy which was also exhibited on behalf of Gipsy music.

There will be scarcely any need to inform the reader that, for a period after forming this momentous resolution, Liszt's life was passed in comparative retirement. Every *pianist*, at all events, will instantly realise the amount of labour which must have been expended in the acquirement of his extraordinary technique; and none will grudge him the solace afforded by his association with the Countess d'Agoult at Geneva during the period which followed. That lady may be recalled as writing under the *nom de plume* of "Daniel Stern," but will probably be best remembered by the reader as the mother of Cosima, widow of Richard Wagner.

On his return to Paris Liszt found the pianistic field in the complete possession of Thalberg. To deal with the rivalry between these two giants of the piano would lead us far away from our subject; but we may refer to its intensity, as well as to the length of the period since Liszt's last visit to Hungary in order to suggest that now, if ever, the ground was well prepared for some forgetfulness of his old Gipsy friends. When the time came for a sojourn in the old place he seems to have arranged for the journey somewhat stealthily; for he tells us

that, upon that occasion, he quite quietly attended mass at the poor village church where, as a child, he used to bend his little knees in humble devotion. To his surprise, however, the church was full; and the mass, for the first time within his experience, sung by the entire congregation. It was no great Church festival: what therefore could it all mean?

It meant, in short, that somehow the news had mysteriously spread that Franz was coming home; and that there was to be no mistake about the manner of receiving him. In reading the touching account of the marvellous demonstrations given by the Gipsies in his honour one requires to be cold indeed if able to withhold sympathy—with Franz of course in the first place, but scarcely less with the Gipsies' warmth of feeling.

The account which Liszt has given us of the "farewell concert" in particular is such a masterpiece of narration that it tempts us to indulge in a slight digression, in order to discuss Liszt as a litterateur.

* * * * * * *

It is more or less natural that Liszt's power as a writer should be cast into the shade by his supremacy in the active world of music. A further reason for this exists in the fact that a large portion of his literary output exists in the form of letters. Things have so changed since the time when success in the epistolary form was sufficient for the acquirement of literary renown that, now, the adoption of that form condemns the writer to a comparative obscurity. In a lesser degree perhaps, but with equal certainty, this also applies to newspaper articles; the ephemeral trait of which continues to cling to them in spite of all superior value. If we so far conform to the usual bias as to exclude features of the two kinds mentioned we are reduced to the two outstanding works: the "Life of Chopin" and "Gipsy Music in Hungary"; of the latter of which the present volume is a translation. The subject of the former cannot be said to offer the same field either for speculative inquiry or power of reasoning as the latter; from which it follows that the Gipsy work may be taken as representing Liszt as closely in the literary sense as its contents picture him in the biographical. Whether, as is often said, the Princess Wittgenstein is really answerable for the fulsomeness, over abundant use of metaphor and other alleged shortcomings it would be dangerous to decide. Her influence upon Liszt was

undoubtedly very great, and her doings very active. At the same time, the extra fulsomeness charged was in complete accord with the temperament of Liszt; who, after all, has accepted responsibility. From our own point of view as translator he might well do so; the abundance of metaphor appearing to us as a great beauty. This necessarily remains a point, however, which the reader will prefer to decide for himself.

* * * * * * *

Returning now to the main course of Liszt's career we may take for granted that the reader will no longer expect any amount of interruption to influence our hero's gipsy love. The time was now approaching for the concert touring period, from 1840 to 1848; for a succession, that is, of artistic triumphs, such as has probably never been equalled, either before or since. Who but Liszt, being at the prime of life, with a world-wide celebrity so industriously and honourably attained—so fruitful in honour and every estimable kind of reward—would have done otherwise than remain in its enjoyment?

But no! Feeling within himself the power of still further advancing the interests of musical art by the exercise of his creative genius he now gave all up for the position of Hofkapellmeister in Weimar. The twelve years of his activity in that place appertain as much to the career of Wagner as to his own; and that circumstance, together with the extreme importance of the works upon which he was now engaged, certainly bears on the surface an appearance of relegating the Gipsy subject to the background. We will therefore quote a slight occurrence to serve as corrective to this idea.

Towards the close of 1859 Liszt's young Gipsy friend Josy happened to catch sight of a newspaper article by his old patron and wrote to him, as it were, for "auld lang syne." Liszt's reply, to which the reader is invited to refer, will adequately settle his mind upon this point, and thus enable us, irrespective of the sojourn in Rome, to pass on to matters more closely concerning our immediate subject.

The reader already knows that this book owes its existence to the "Rhapsodies Hongroises"; but he must not suppose those compositions to form the composer's only contribution to the Gipsy style. A slight obscurity arises from the term "Gipsy" being of rare occurrence, those of Hungarian,

Bohemian or Zigeuner being mostly in use; and this obscurity is rendered still greater by the fact that, on the face of things, Liszt's use of the term Hungarian seems to be in opposition to his own principles. This is, of course, not really the case; but the apparent contradiction will have to be explained.

The simple fact is that Liszt's opinion of the origin of Gipsy melodies was quite different from that of the majority of his own countrymen. In their view these melodies are national; that is to say of genuine Hungarian origin. Liszt on the contrary has been at the greatest pains to show that this could not by any possibility have been the case. The detail of his argument may be easily referred to; and, after examining it, the reader will probably marvel that any contrary view should be held at all. He is likely to be still further astonished when he finds that, notwithstanding his argument, Liszt himself describes these melodies as "Hungarian"—an example of which the rhapsodies themselves afford.

Fortunately the second of these puzzles explains the first; though not without some slight historical reference. Hungary is the only country where, in former times, the Gipsy was enabled to dwell in peace; and, but for the welcome there accorded him, his music could not have possibly survived. It depends so largely upon improvisation, and passes so precariously from one generation to another, that probably the assistance of notation which it received in Hungary does not quite comprise the share which Hungarian musicians have taken in its preservation. Add to that the many compositions by Hungarian musicians in Gipsy style, which it is quite natural that they should be successfully able to imitate, and we cannot wonder that at last, as Liszt admits, they should have been unable quite to decide what belonged to them and what did not.

Hence it is that Liszt has so far modified his view as to regard Gipsy music as mutually evolved; the Hungarian's share in its existence consisting of the fact that without his assistance it could not have survived. It is in this way that the term Hungarian becomes permissible without involving any great sacrifice of correctness.

These few words will no doubt suffice as a preparation for perusal of the book; which is now for the first time translated into English. It might be natural to consider the very delay in

offering it to the English public as proof in itself of the rhapsodies not being in any dire need of elucidation. That may be so. But, on the other hand, it is perfectly safe to predict that whoever conscientiously goes through the volume will, for the future, find his appreciation of these novel works and the consequent pleasure derived from their performance considerably increased.

EDWIN EVANS, SENIOR.

LONDON.

PART I.

THE TWO WANDERING RACES.

CHAPTER I.

The Poetry of Mankind.

1.—The Birth of the Epic.

IN the infancy of nations, at a time when they have not yet entirely lost the remembrance of their pastoral habits in favour of those of agricultural life interspersed by warlike episodes, their imagination readily feeds (during the leisure provided by a simple but easy existence) on poems; which awaken their taste for heroic emotions. Such poems introduce them to types of striking and marvellous character, which either recount events of national glory or bring to mind catastrophes which have filled them with terror. They thus give body, in a form already provided by art, to the sentiment by which they are themselves moved; and which they love to see reproduced in harmonious strains.

So long as national civilisation has not yet either subjected the masses to an unceasing mechanical labour, or enervated their minds by the multiplicity of factitious wants of its own creation—so long as the popular conception of luxury is merely an abundance of necessary things possessed by enough people to exclude all idea of oppressive want and abject misery, they are never short of the necessary poetic faculties. These, in fact, rank among their first necessities and most precious enjoyments; and afford them the satisfaction of creating an ideal representing the grandest of that which they deem to be exceedingly beautiful.

Generally, this began with a recital, short and simple, but in

rhythm; and set off by images and metaphors—this being taken up by every heart and voice. Then, around this nucleus, there came to be grouped new versions; enlargening and embellishing the first idea. The leading fact was afterwards associated with others, accessory to it. Then, little by little, the interpretation became varied; tradition taking it up, presenting it in different ways, and ennobling and embroidering the theme. The national epic at last resulted from popular instinctive choice of that particular poem which, in point of inspiration, was most identical, and, in respect of form, most in agreement with the genius of the nation.

The primitive recitals which have formed the germ of such subsequent works do more than merely carry the imprint of the character of the people from whom they have emanated. They express much more than the influence exercised on the nation by climate, religion, history, manners and the peculiar shade of poetic sense which is most natural to them; for such early poems are the truest expression and most direct product of the nation itself. In the case of some nations, they were conceived and have been preserved only in fragments; in others, the underlying fable has for a long time circulated in mere outline, passing from mouth to mouth with many variations. These, however, have at last been taken up by some great poet; who has crystallised them into a form at once splendid and definitive; and thus created, out of this desultory material, a complete unity.

2.—Earliest period of the Epic in various countries.

Under the beautiful Grecian sky, the rhapsodists, in their wanderings, attracted the inhabitants of the towns and villages; who grouped around them, in order to hear the narrative of peoples conquered, kingdoms overthrown, and of all kinds of wonderful and admirable adventure. When their detached songs were united into one homogeneous work by ancient Homer, they became a monument of inimitable perfection. It is to genius that we owe this narration of what is necessary to inspire man with those passions which form his greatness; and each succeeding age has always felt obliged to consecrate the enthusiasm for works which have preceded it. But none

have yet been able to reach the Homeric degree of sublimity; and, accordingly, the Iliad remains the immortal pantheon of human virtues.

India was, in particular, the land for exuberance of tropical vegetation. There, contemplation of the most dramatic scenery, of the most gigantic mountains, and of the most gorgeous rivers, gave a realisation of the most passionate phases of Nature's beauty, and of her proudest magnificence. This so far captivated human imagination that the mountains were deemed the only suitable temple for the gods; and, as the poet accordingly feared to assign any limit to his fantasy, he was liable to reach what was monstrous in his search for the grandiose. Thus, finding no means capable of adequately conveying the majesty of the impressions awakened within himself by these sublime landscapes without recourse to the supernatural and incalculable, he abandoned the method of mere exaggeration. The extravagance of hyperbole was necessary to him; in order to symbolise the infinitude of divine love and adoration, which he proclaimed in the most elevated manner.

Among the Persians, the legends and traditions of a past already enveloped in the impenetrable mist of ages found, for their celebration, a poet of the conquered race. He took from the conquerors that splendid vehicle of thought, a finished language; rich as the embroideries of Cashmire, supple as its tissues, and savoury as its spices; and enshrined therein the glories of a noble race, proud of feats of arms worthy of being immortalised in the Book of Kings.

Among the Arabs, the doctrine of Destiny allowed little play for the free will of man. Their imagination was accordingly limited to the description of beauty's charms, and the dazzling privileges of wealth; as is shown by those capricious settings, the "Thousand and One Nights," which make no pretence of representing reality.

The bards of Scandinavia were faced with a frigid nature; the result of senses kept long in a state of tension. There, the tyranny of a climate, rarely brightened by a passing smile, naturally held up courage to such admiration as to amount to voluptuousness. Thus, the reward which their Walhalla held out to the elect consisted of only fresh combats, with continual victory.

The beginning of the Middle Ages was a time when the

popular mind was attracted by the mystic images of a religion scarcely yet understood. Therein, symbol and sentiment constantly appearing as mutually productive, wonderful accounts became circulated of heroic deeds accomplished by noble spirits aflame with generous ardour; and who, like the demigods of mythology, became celebrated for their great feats of deliverance. That the heroes of Christianity should unite an almost superhuman courage to virtues of pious tenderness naturally emanated from a faith which softened the heart whilst fortifying the powers of endurance. This was the period which produced the marvellous legends in which the part of Roland resembles that of Achilles in the ancient world.

The Slavs, in their ballads and romantic poems, tell of family events giving rise to civil wars; of family affections occupying the most touching situations; and of the festivals and performances given by their opulent hospitality as being the most brilliant.

But when, at last, new continents and an entire new world were actually discovered and conquered, then the adventures of explorers and their descriptions of far-off countries provided the Iberian dialects with such a poem that, in it, the fantastic became grandiose and reality could well appear in the most flaming colours.

3.—The Epic's first stage of evolution.

National poetry has everywhere taken the sentiments which hold the popular sympathy; and, having united them under the symbolism of facts, reproduced them in its own form. Under the veil of myth, it held out to the people, in a style of language easy to be remembered, a graphic description of the particular passion with which it was most natural for them to identify themselves—generally some object of ambition or pride; of fancy or love; of regret or common suffering; to which, in this way, tradition gradually imparted a plastic figure. In addition to the nourishment thus afforded to the imagination, came the lively attraction of rhythm; which, by fascinating the ear, assisted the memory to retain the text. This natural music of verse was associated either with declamation, modulated and cadenced as a sort of recitative, or

with a somewhat nearer approach to our melody; both of these elements of enjoyment becoming so intimately joined that they finally took the same name. Thus it was that the poem came to be divided by the canto or song.

From these facts we are enabled to see what is the first form which poetry assumes among a primitive people; that is to say, a people uncultivated, who know neither industry nor commerce; neither the arts nor the sciences of civilisation. The first form which poetry assumes among them is not lyric poetry, that sublimated expression of the poet's own (we might almost say) subjective emotions; but epic poetry, that objective representation of the collective sentiments of an entire people. Thus it is easy to see that an intelligence even as slightly developed as that of a child is quite capable of identifying itself with impressions generally received and aroused by stirring events within the common knowledge. On the other hand, it requires an intellectual culture far more developed and refined to proceed to the expression of poetic moments of exclusively individual character; to which must be added, the difficulty of making sure of meeting with emotional minds and vibrating hearts, ready to enter into the full flow of feeling which, betimes, may be not only special to the individual but altogether exceptional in character.

As regards the various literary grades which poetic history records of any particular race, we find that the recital of collective sentiments always precedes under one form or another the sigh or the smile—the expression of the personal joy or grief of the poet, as reflected in his lines. Even a race, the national poetry of which might not include any such recital, would not constitute an exception to the rule on that account; as we see clearly by the important songs without words which formed the poetic archives of the one race of which we are now about to speak.

4.—First appearance of the Gipsy race in Europe.

Among the peoples of Europe there is one which rose up quite suddenly one day, without anyone being able to say exactly where it had sprung from. It descended upon our continent without evincing the slightest desire of conquest; and without even demanding any right of permanent residence. It had evidently no desire to appropriate one single inch of land; but, on the other hand, it set its face completely against the grant of an hour's service to anyone. Without any idea of subjugating others, it would not itself be subjugated. Nothing would it either accept or give. Nor would it explain from what African or Asiatic plains it had come, nor what might have been the cause of its sudden desire for change of residence. It neither looked back to any remembrance, nor forward to any hope. It refused all possible benefits which might attach to colonisation; and was apparently too vain of its sad race to condescend to mingle with any other. It contented itself with living, to the exclusion of every strange element; and, though side by side with Christian civilisation, had no desire to participate in any of its advantages. There was, in fact, no prospect that such civilisation would prove to be any less uncongenial than others which it had equally well known, and disdained in the same way.

This is indeed a strange people—so strange as to resemble no other in anything whatever. It has neither country, religion, history nor code of any description. It seems only to continue to exist because it absolutely refuses to cease to do so; refusing also to be anything but what it is actually, and permitting no influence, no prescription, no persecution, and no instruction either to modify, dissolve or extirpate it. It divides into tribal hordes, or bands; which move, either in this direction or that, entirely as dictated by chance, without any means of communication; partly even ignorant of each other's existence. Yet, however distant they may be from one another, each retains, with a solidarity held sacred, the three infallible rallying signs. These consist of the same physiognomy, the same language, and the same mode of life.

To our eyes this people seems to lead what is practically an animal existence; in the sense that it has neither any know-

ledge nor interest in anything beyond itself. Ages may come and go, the world may travel on, the countries which shelter it may be either at war or at peace, they may change their masters or transform their customs; but to all these events it remains impassible and indifferent. Yet, in its existence from day to day, it is willing enough to profit by the preoccupations caused by events affecting the fate of other nations, so far as it is thereby enabled to exist more easily; but it disappears through the forests and towards the mountain gorges as soon as it perceives that the attention of the local authority is being turned in its direction. It reminds one of a troop of human birds, nestling in the foliage of the woods, waking up strange echoes, and causing strange reflections in hidden streams; then, starting again its migration from climate to climate, in the same degree as it is obliged to flee from rigour and to seek other firmaments where the conditions are less strenuous.

This is a people which neither associates itself with the joys or griefs, nor with the prosperity or misfortune, of any other; and which, as if it were Sarcasm itself in person, ridicules both the ambitions and the sorrows, the struggles and the festivities, of all others.

It is one which does not itself know either whence it came or whither it is going; and which supports itself in an existence altogether abnormal while preserving no tradition and registering no annals. A race having neither any religion nor any law, any definite belief or any rule of conduct; holding together only by gross superstition, vague custom, constant misery and profound abasement; yet obstinately persisting, in spite of all degradations and deprivations, in keeping its tents and its rags, its hunger and its liberty.

It is a people which exercises on civilised nations a fascination as hard to describe as to destroy; passing, as it does, like some mysterious legacy, from age to age; and one which, though of ill-repute, appeals to our greatest poets by the energy and charm of its types. But, most important of all, this is a race which must, after all, retain somewhere within its heart a trace of noble quality; since, being capable of idealisation, it has idealised itself; and is in possession of poems and cantos capable of forming, when united, the national Epopeia of the Bohemians.

We say "Epopeia," although their poems and songs contain

no recital, refer to no event, and recall no souvenir. What they really do is to repeat sentiments applying to all individuals of the same race—sentiments which go to form their interior type, the physiognomy of their soul, the expression of their entire sentient being. There is not a fragment, long or short, of this collective work which tells of any personal emotion or of one not common to all—any impression so far subjective as to appear strange to any one of the race. Each page, or stanza, detached from their poem (which depends upon this unity for its right to such a title) expresses only what everyone feels, sings and poetises; only impressions which are common to all, without one single exception; and the effect of which, in every case, reaches to the very marrow of their bones.

CHAPTER II.

The Epic of a Nation.

1.—The prospect under Bohemian conditions.

IT is not difficult to realise the position of the Gipsy race in the absence of all intellectual culture, and the sweet leisure of well-being peaceably enjoyed. With no history, religiously preserved and set out; no revered faith, associated with manners purified by a moral code; nor any customs, sanctioned by time and imparting solemnity to domestic changes and family events; no love of country or attachment to the soil and home; it would be impossible for a people to possess a poet, capable of delivering in heroic form, active and mobile sentiments; these being precisely those which he has denied, cast forth and banished from his soul. His condition is that he is imprisoned by the passive but invincible force of inertia; which only allows him to exist and perpetuate himself on condition of remaining inaccessible to all emotions felt by his fellow men.

It was inevitable that burning aspirations, passionate dreams, remembrances impossible to disclose and disappointments beyond their power to explain, should appear in flaming vision and traverse the soul of such a people. But, should the day arrive when it might desire to sing to itself its own poetry, it would have to seek for that purpose some other medium than articulate speech. It could not, in speech, recount its most intimate impressions; except in avoiding all precision and withholding all revelation of object. There could be no escape to the light of day of what it destines only for the

dark recesses of its own heart; for the reason that the silence which it imposes on itself (which we may describe as its only religion, precept and law) does not allow of its taking pleasure in any recital of which it is itself the subject.

But let us suppose it tempted to express itself in speech. The question then arises whether it would be capable of rendering in the form of imagery and symbol (such as poetic conditions would naturally exact) the vague instincts and past impressions which no doubt linger in its memory. It is in too close contact with mere existence; being without yesterday in memory, or to-morrow in view. It cannot even copy the guests of the forest it inhabits, in their independence and freedom from care. Yet, all mental effort, all speculative operation of the intelligence, are as unknown to it as they would be repugnant if the attempt were made to submit to them; the fact being that this people has no taste for any calculation beyond that of a feline trick or crafty deception; the practice of which they borrow from certain animals, and employ in the same way—namely, to deceive an enemy or secure a prey.

2.—The choice of instrumental music as medium.

It must be admitted that, amongst this people, we certainly do meet here and there with ballads and romances. These rare specimens of song, rudely forged in their own language, or borrowed from others, are, however, no more than rough sketches; quite undeserving to be ranked with works of art. It may be that, for singing, inspiration alone suffices, so far as song may be considered independent of words; but, for the manipulation of words, as for the building of verse, some intellectual culture is necessary.

To meet this case it must be observed that, amongst all the arts, instrumental music is precisely that which expresses sentiment without proceeding to any direct application of it. It does not attempt to clothe the feeling it expresses with any allegory of facts, as narrated by the poem; nor does it seek to illustrate it by conflicts, as represented on the theatre stage, by actual persons of the drama and their action. It brightens and charms the passions in their very essence, without endeavouring to represent them by real or imaginary personifications.

It divests them of the influence of the surroundings among which they have slowly up-grown; and, like a precious sparkling diamond suddenly released from its prison, they accordingly shed their radiance. The emotions expressed by instrumental music are withdrawn from all positive assertion; neither cause nor effect being assigned to them. They are depicted only in their glow of virtual strength; thus speaking without either divulging their secret origin or their unknown extent.

Instrumental music is also the most suitable of all the arts, to release the passions from their residue in the form of hurtful applications. In this way, it enables them to be enjoyed in their purest essence; and with the most exalted motive. Manifested only in their intrinsic brilliance, they are caused by it to flow directly from the heart; just as the pure sap and most fragrant of rare essences sheds itself from a wound made in the bark of a tree.

It was quite natural that a people leading a debased and cruel existence should have chosen this art in preference to any other, when it desired for itself some means of ennobling those primitive instincts of its being which had remained so long buried in silent mystery. Moreover, did it not thus discover, without the painful effort of any laborious intellectual labour, the only language it could employ? and that, by using music to gratify a sensual craving, it could easily obtain a new moral gratification? In the very act of passing the bow across the violin-strings a natural inspiration suggested itself; and, without any search for them, there came rhythms, cadences, modulations, melodies and tonal discourses. This was therefore the discreet form of art in which the Gipsy confided—this the enigmatical mould to which he consigned that talisman which keeps him free of our occupations; causing him to disdain every object of our interest, and to remain insensible to every temptation we can offer; by governing him absolutely and despotically. In his music he revealed that golden ray of interior light proper to himself, which otherwise the world would never have known or suspected. He made it dance and glitter in the fascination of a wild harmony, fantastic and full of discords; and thus, by a mixture of unexpected outline, glaring colour, sudden change and quick transformation, endowed it with its many seductive features.

3.—What is an Epic?

If the scattered fragments of Bohemian instrumental music were once collected with reference to meaning, and arranged with proper respect to the succession necessary to exhibit their mutual influence, they would, by providing an expression of collective sentiments inherent to an entire people, enable us to determine the racial character and manners. When that fact is properly kept in view, it will scarcely seem an exaggeration to give to such a collection the name of "National Epopeia."

Without risk, however, of treating two essentially different things as if they were identical; and without wishing to incur all the detail involved in a minute and rigid comparison between an epic work and a musical cyclus; we, for our own part, consider the title of Epopeia as fully due to the analogy of inspiration to be met with in all these detached pieces. It is always one and the same; heroic and bearing the imprint of the genius peculiar to the race.

An epic is not constituted by the mere recital of a certain number of facts, by the description of so many different sites, or by an account of the usages and objects in vogue at a certain period. The great distinguishing feature of this kind of poem is the nature of the passions which the various characters exhibited display in action. Such passions are for the most part spontaneous, absolute and imperious; without which qualities the actions produced by them could not possess that seal of grandeur and that charm of being true to nature which is never lacking in the first poetic expression of popular imagination.

Passions and sentiments alike spontaneous and imperious form the very breath of Bohemian music, notwithstanding the absence of narration. These passions and sentiments, ascribed by language to particular individuals (in giving us their discourse or informing us of their resolutions) remain absolutely of the same nature in Bohemian music in spite of their being manifested by means of an art not requiring the intermediary assistance of legend or myth.

If the picture thus produced fails to appeal to the curiosity or sustain the interest of listeners, it will not on that account any the less fulfil everything required by those yearning enthusiasms so dear to the youth of nations.

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4.—Hegel's Philosophy of the Epic.

Hegel is certainly not wrong when he gives to the word Epos the signification rather of the verb "to say" than that of the noun "legend"; and especially when he accordingly proceeds to place monumental inscriptions first in order, as representing the first stage of poetic attempts; after which follow sentences and gnomic verses by authors, not only unknown, but scarcely even traditional; primitive theogony; cosmogony and so forth.

In order to explain the intimate analogy of inspiration which exists between poetic works of this kind and the whole entity of any work truly national, we cannot do better than quote the very words of this philosopher; for it would be idle to seek other words for what he has not only so well expressed, but in a form so completely in agreement with our own thought.

That epic work, the Saga, Book or Bible of a people, is an original entity of which every great and important nation possesses an example; and in which its primitive genius stands confessed. Considered in this light such monuments are nothing less than foundations of the national conscience. Thus, it would be highly interesting if a collection of such epic bibles were formed; for such a series of Epopeia (assuming them not to be artificial productions of a later age) would constitute for us a gallery exhibiting the genius of various nations. Yet, all such bibles have not the epic form.

The real Epos appears at that early period when the youthful conscience of a nation expresses itself poetically for the first time: but the developed epic poem belongs to an intermediary epoch, when the nation is awakening from its stupor, and feels itself strong enough to proclaim its own world of thought; and within that world to feel itself at home. On the other hand, everything which, later on, is destined to take the form of fixed dogma or of moral and religious law remains, up to this moment, a question of living individual opinion; for will and sentiment have not yet become separated from one another

It must not be imagined, however, that a nation in that early period of its history which is the real nursery of its Epos already possesses the art of poetically depicting itself. Poetic nationality is, in itself, something quite different from poetry as the power of consciously representing a certain stage of civilisation. The necessity of expressing such conceptions, or, in other words, the development of art, necessarily comes later than the poetic life in its first stage; which goes on quite unconcerned with such questions.

But, notwithstanding the distance thus apparently separating the poet from his subject, a narrow link unites them. For the poet's life must be passed among relations, ideas and beliefs similar to those which he proposes to portray. In other words, he must feel only the necessity of giving artistic form to things which form the familiar realities of his time.

Farther on Hegel adds:

The relations of moral life, the organisation of the family, as of society and the entire nation both in war and peace, must have already attained to a certain development; but not so far as to the general establishment of principles, duties and laws, with power of asserting themselves against individual will. On the contrary, its principles must appear to emanate from the moral sense, from natural equity, and from the manners and character of the persons concerned. It should not be that any abstract reason under a positive and prosaic form should set up rights confronting those of the heart or dominate, individual conscience, and passion; by compelling submission to its decrees.

The national world presents two aspects:

Firstly, the material—comprising all usages connected with the physical constitution, the geographic and climatic situation, the configuration of the country, its mountains, forests and all surrounding nature.

Secondly, the spiritual—comprising the fund of national thought, as revealed in religion, the family and civil society.

It follows, therefore, that if a primitive Epopeia is to exist and endure as we have stipulated—that is to say, as the veritable and immortal book of the nation—its Saga, or tradition, will only be able to retain a living and durable interest if the external features of national character which it presents are in intimate harmony with the nation's fund of thought; including its moral and intellectual tendencies.

Otherwise, the Saga's representations will become a matter of mere accident and indifference.

5.—*Qualities of the "Saga."*

The sense in which a musical Epopeia may become the Saga, or book of the nation, is that it should form the prime source from which that nation draws the inner knowledge of itself. It should emanate from the living, personal thought which, however unconsciously, characterises the individuals of that nation; during the social stage when will and sentiment are not yet separated. That is the stage when social life has not yet arrived at the condition represented by principles, duties and laws, to the sacrifice of individuality—the stage when intellect has not yet taken up its stand, in the form of prosaic actuality, against heart and individual feeling.

Since, then, it is not every saga which is in epic form, what form could be more appropriate than instrumental music (without words) for the national bible of a people who challenge such items of nationality as doctrine, worship, law, land, country, family and property of all kinds; retaining only its ancient and indestructible instincts; consisting of eccentric

passions, strange tastes, and irrepressible disgust for everything which other nations regard as the charm of their existence?

The Gipsies, notwithstanding their having repulsed all those traits of character the various mixtures of which constitute the resemblances of other nations among themselves, remain a distinct people endowed with prodigious vitality. That being the case, they feel, as other nations do in similar circumstance —the necessity of possessing their own Epos. But, since they have neither the power nor the knowledge to describe themselves in language, and still less to give any account of facts within their memory, either fictional or symbolic, how else than in instrumental music could they have told their tale? Their song though equally deprived of legend, facts, events, characters and types, is none the less an Epos; for the reason that it expresses nothing but passions, emotions and impressions common to all; and not only common to them; but, what is even more to the point, it expresses nothing but what belongs exclusively to them, and to no other people.

6.—Conditions of the enquiry.

When, after attentively examining a monument of art, we recognise in its structure an unmistakable originality, and perceive in the sentiments from which it has evidently proceeded a clear affinity with aspirations of a high order, it is natural to ask "What is the cause of this originality?" and, "What is the source and final cast of these sentiments?" In the present case such questions appear to have an increased interest, through the answers to them not immediately appearing. We are, in fact, scarcely in a position even to search for these answers until we have made a preliminary enquiry into some other problems, from which the above questions cannot possibly be detached.

It happens that, by a strange anomaly, the Gipsies are endowed with a remarkably strong sense of self-preservation; in spite of their apparent refusal to form part of the human race. How would it be possible, therefore, to succeed in understanding their art, unless we begin by discovering the relations

(which cannot fail to exist, though at first they may seem to be beyond reach of investigation) between the character of their sentiments and that of their songs?

In the very first place, we must ascertain the seat of the secret correspondence between individualities, of abject appearance whose manners descend even to bestiality, and songs, full of proud defiance, deep sorrow and a grace unquestionably proceeding from appreciation of the beautiful. We must seriously endeavour to explain what association of ideas and instincts it is, which causes these detached members of the great human family to remain inaccessible to every fusion of interest or sentiment with the civilised nations, amongst whom they have lived for centuries.

7.—Contrast with the Jews.

Without giving any plausible reason for it, the Gipsies have consistently resisted all temptation to participate in the prosperity of the favoured nations, as well as the weakness of allowing a drop of foreign blood to mingle with their race. This last fact is sufficiently proved by the purity of their type; which, at the present day, corresponds exactly with the descriptions which have descended to us from the very earliest times. Such Gipsy women as may have become contaminated —or such as may have stolen children in order to bring them up as their own, are permanently alienated; and never recognised as stock of the race; either in the camp, or the individual Gipsy's tent.

On the other hand, and in the midst of all the privations, unspeakable sufferings and inhuman persecutions they have endured, they have never had any renegades worthy of mention—never any fortunate apostates. We never find amongst them any who ostentatiously deny their own; who cast off their misery, renounce their nudity, or curse their hunger in order to partake of a prosperity, vilely acquired. Never any who deny their origin, or fly from the camp. And never any who embrace a faith which their ancestors did not know; even in order to identify themselves with that love, rising above all nationalities because it embraces the entire human race in its great charity.

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The existence of this race is as remarkable for its tenacity as for its general strangeness; and, in order to make a complete review of its remarkable features, we may begin by noting their arrival in Europe during the fourteenth century in so silent and gradual a manner as to render their coming practically imperceptible. It almost appeared as if they had risen from the ground; and we shall, accordingly, have enormous difficulty in finding even confused traces of their first appearance. Their arrival amongst us was from the direction of Hungary; but where they came from is as difficult to determine as the rest. The enquiry perhaps will be best advanced by comparing their means of subsistence with those of another people who have equally maintained themselves in Europe without country, without shelter, and without hospitality; but whose stability is considered as miraculous.

We shall see that, by comparison with the Jew, the Gipsy has always lived in much more unfavourable circumstances. We are in fact filled with astonishment that a whole people could consent to lead so hard a life. They have sustained their race for ages under conditions which would have been beyond the power of endurance of any other; and it has been done, moreover, without keeping any record, cherishing any hope or clinging to any particular country. Yet, notwithstanding their having spread in all directions, never has one been found to take up the Christian life in thought or action. In this respect they are remarkably unlike that other proscribed family to which we allude, amongst whom there have been frequent examples of apostasy. Jews there are who have not only founded a family and created a brilliant name among their oppressors; but have even gone so far as to blush for their own origin.

CHAPTER III.

Racial Standpoint of the Jew.

1.—His moral portrait.

THE Jews are also a proscribed race, wandering from country to country—sometimes tolerated and sometimes banished—sometimes left at peace and sometimes persecuted; but always forming a compact mass absolutely impervious, either to the teachings of any doctrine but *their own*, or to the advantages of any law but *their own*; for it should be known that the first of all dogmas as well as the first of all laws—is *their own*; the one inflexible, the other unrelenting.

How simple does the spectacle presented to us by the Jewish nation appear in comparison with that offered by the Gipsy race, which becomes the more incomprehensible the more we reflect upon it. How easy does the explanation seem of the causes which forcibly bind together in one sheaf a people calling itself the "People of God," when we proceed to consider the complete absence of any such motive in the case of the Gipsies.

The Jews have, it is true, been treated for nineteen hundred years as a race accursed; opprobrium, insult and defamation having during that period been heaped upon them. But they returned hatred for ignominy, evil for disgrace, and vengeance for defamation. They accepted the place assigned to them by Christian civilisation, but with the inner resolve to turn its putridity into a hot-bed of misfortune and calamity; from which there should radiate upon their oppressors the contagion

of a leprosy of unnamed, undiscoverable and intangible misery; capable of eating away the living fibres of their constitution. If, when too late, they were at last ejected from the filthy dens where they had nevertheless accumulated means for punishing both persecutors and dupes, they only quitted them to carry to other nations the same honeyed reprisals, the same hypocritical hatred and the same implacable designs.

Wherever they settled they were never content merely to draw their nourishment from the land itself, even at the expense of the native people. They were principally bent on acquiring the science of obtaining a fatal superiority over those who had allowed them to pass their frontiers; and seemed to inhale it with every breath, taste it with every morsel, relish it with every fruit and extract it from every exhilarating drink. Appearing to be cowardly, they yet guarded with a solemn courage their execrable worship, their calumniated ceremonies, their prayers, usages and costumes—objects respectively of scandal, mockery and insult. Even their numerous distinctive signs (such as the pointed cap or the rags imposed upon them as marks of infamy) they retained. Disgraced they were, yet feared and courted by their hosts; compensating flagellations, outrage, horror, calumny and indignation by the pride of their past—their glorious patrimony. They had both an immense hope and a reasoned faith of severe beauty. Their faith, moreover, was supported by a legislative code; out of which there proceeded a social organisation, narrow perhaps, but so much the more firm and solid.

Whilst blindly obeying ordinances which are absolute and inelastic but of such wonderful construction and of such antiquity that they seem like the magnificent exemplification of antediluvian moral petrification, the Jews, with the unexampled covetousness of their distorted passions, present a millennarian example of disinterestedness.

With the mobility of their active natures they also present an immovable monument which, though violently assaulted by the hurricanes and storms proceeding from a foolish popular fury, and though often struck by the destructive thunderbolts of royal greed, has never been overcome by these various conspiring elements; and has never had its marvellous vitality weakened or its incompressible nationality affected.

The organic force of this strange race has always known how to heal the wounds left untended, how to give fresh life

to the charred branches and to make the amputated limbs to grow again. Exhausted energy was always renewed and the veins restored which had been cruelly opened.

2.—The Jewish outlook upon the Gentile world.

Why should the Jews deny having been inundated with outrages and crushed with injuries?

The greater their debasement, the longer the period of its duration, the deeper the thongs cut into their bruised flesh as they were pursued from shore to shore, the more astonishing the constancy with which they confessed their God—their Messiah, their hope and the immortal truth of their principle. The debility of scepticism has never attacked their marrow. In the midst of their most profound humiliations they have cursed the apostate and anathematised the heretic; precisely as if theirs had been the religion of the State.

With the same vain glory of living by occupations which injure, and an equal pride in injuring again by other callings which enrich themselves, they have invented resources the fertile ingenuity of which inspires us with wonder. In their eyes the act of weakening their enemies or diminishing and reducing them in any sense is a holy and a glorious work; seeing that, as they are the chosen people of God, their enemies must be His enemies also—even the enemies of the Most High, the Creator of heaven and earth. They have so braced up their spirit to fight these enemies of God that they disdained to apply any remedies to the weakness of their bodies which had become enfeebled in this holy warfare. These outcasts from all the advantages of Christian society very soon perceived that, even if their arm had preserved the athletic power of Samson himself, their fight would on that account have been simply the more vain. This conclusion naturally followed when, considering that the country in which they were living was not their own; and that they would not, under any circumstances, condescend to take root in it.

The Jews very early renounced all pretence to bravery in a superhuman contest where they claim to have supernatural aid already upon their side. In doing this they incidentally show contempt for Christians who have often displayed courage

of this kind; and find it a convenient way of expressing disgust at the disgust excited by their own cowardice and greed —two vices out of which they seem to have made virtues, after their own kind.

As regards manner of life the Jews have accepted all the inconveniences of material enervation; bowing and scraping, even crawling, and allowing themselves to be trodden under foot. But, the more fearfully they were treated, or the more they have been tortured (as victims justly, equitably and legally given over to the savage cruelty of the populace), the more they have felt entitled to call down upon their pitiless executioners the wrath of the God of Sabaoth; of the heavenly hosts and of that God who, in causing them to depart from the land of bondage, allowed them to carry off the vessels of gold and silver which had belonged to the oppressors whom He had drowned in the Red Sea. The more they were scorned (formerly, by the way, it was with a red-hot iron in hand; but now it is with a peculiar smile) the more they nourished the secret sarcasm, in order to augment and fortify their right to pursue their hatred and exploitation of the stronger.

The Polish Jew, even in our own day, still presents his back to the cane of the angered noble. But, even while he is in the act of crying

Strike! Strike!

we can imagine him quietly saying to himself:

You will have to pay me for this in ready money!

Yet, in doing so, he is only obeying the traditional principle of his people; whose exegesis permits and authorises the premeditated injury of enemies in every way, whether by ruse or violence.

In virtue of this doctrine those who oppress them they impoverish; those who defame them they outwit; considering them all merely as Gentiles. Formerly they so considered the Philistines, the Ammonites, the Midianites and the Amalekites. These were all idolaters, reprobates, born enemies of God, destined sooner or later to fall into their hands; whom it was not only permissible but praiseworthy to deceive, to scotch or to bleed to death. "A tooth for a tooth," said Moses. And now, at the bottom of their embittered hearts, they still repeat

Hatred for hatred;

as they count up the retaliation penalty in the shape of rate of interest.

They soon perceived that it sufficed to attach themselves to an autonomous society by the thousand fibres of parasitic plants in order to absorb its vital sap. The genius of a controlled passion has led them to abandon force even in exigency; for they have found a frankly disclosed weakness far the better arm in the campaign to gain a footing on the moving ground of commerce and industry. Moreover, the doctors of the law who expound the Pentateuch, who study and meditate upon the Prophets, and who mysteriously unfold their words of destiny, never authorised them even to do so much as place the hand upon the plough in a land which was not their own.

This could not be; because, for such an authorisation, it would have been necessary to abandon their fantastic idea of the coming of a Messiah who would one day deliver up to them all the nations for punishment, and all the goods of the earth to repletion, on condition of their never having sown the corn or gathered in the vine on any other soil than that of the Promised Land—that country symbolically standing for their celestial home.

Now, it would have been a hundred times easier to give up life than to renounce hope in this Messiah; for the Rabbis, their masters, would readily enough grant pardon to the deserter, the apostate or the courtesan who preserved this faith; but would immediately consign to Gehenna whoever lost it.

3.—Hebrew methods.

The Christians, at first, everywhere refused the possession of land to the sons of the people who had murdered their God.

But, at last, there came a time when Christian charity became abducted like an unprotected priestess and disguised like a virgin dressed out in the gaudy finery of a prostitute. Changing, for the time being, the name of its attractions, it called itself "philosophy" in the eighteenth century, but "democracy" in the nineteenth; the latter offering to the Jews the modern laws of liberty, equality and fraternity. These laws

gave opportunity to the Jew (with his white hand so lean and impoverished and his hooked fingers so deformed by much counting of money) to seize the plough on fertile plains and handle the vintager's bill on the smiling hill-side.

The Jew's procedure now was that he simply bought the field and the vineyard, at the same time taking very good care to put no hand to the work. His fingers were used to much more delicate operations, the much more subtle task of weighing up gold and diamonds, estimating papers light in weight but of the value of empires; not, however, neglecting to go on counting up the pence which his usurious percentages continued to gnaw in all directions.

At last, the conception of all this became so general that popular legend took it up; and personified the Jew and his destiny in the myth of the

"Wandering Jew,"

always pursued, always standing, always sad, always alert, always destitute. But always full of resource, never welcome at any hospitable threshold but never short of the monetary symbol by which hospitality may be purchased. And not hospitality alone but power also; for, by dint of steadily acquiring money, power is gradually monopolised.

For all that, however, the Hebrews have too well preserved the details of their millennial history—the history of their land promised and granted, conquered and lost—not to have retained a secret predilection in favour of their ancient agricultural habits. This people, notwithstanding that they are eternally wandering, fleeing because they are pursued, and preferring emigration to transformation, are really by nature sedentary. The Jew recognises having been a shepherd in the days of Abraham and Isaac, to have become a labourer in the time of Jacob, and to have partaken of bread the fruit of seed of his own growing in the country of Mizraïm. He does not forget that Palestine (divided amongst the twelve tribes which it fed with the purest corn and refreshed with the choicest wine) was the most beautiful of all kingdoms at the time of David and Solomon. And, above all, he does not forget that he is to re-occupy that land; and that it will fall to him to give it back its splendour and to convert it into the perfumed garden, the floral bower, the most delicious retreat, and the nearest foretaste of Paradise which the world can offer.

For the Jew, therefore, it is not as it is for the Gipsy, a day of rejoicing when he has to fold up the ragged covering of his tent and seek elsewhere a repetition of the hard life which is the inevitable lot of both of them. It is never his choice to leave a country all the while there is an ear of corn still to be bought or sold in it or a red cent to be secured; in which respect he is like those flocks which never desert a pasturage until its surface is so bare that not a solitary blade of grass remains. But what is really to be admired in the Jew is that his principle dominates his instinct. He does not give way to the one unless it agrees with the other.

The Jews have a superstitious fear—in fact a horror—of thrusting the ploughshare into a soil which is not their heritage. In such a case they would be afraid of being caught as in a trap, or of finding themselves limed in a black and greasy soil. They would expect some impious growths, and look forward to being for ever attached to a foreign glebe, as a heavenly punishment which they would have brought down upon their own heads, already so overcharged; if they dared to cultivate a land which was not their own, to harvest the fruits of another zone, to moisten an impure soil with the sweat of their brow, and enjoy the fertility of a country which it is their duty to curse.

But, for all these pious principles, they were none the less ready, the moment the right to possess land had been granted them, to start making a profit out of it by engaging others at a wage to do the work. Others were to plough the forbidden ground; their workmen could till the soil of their investment. Besides that, the purchase was merely a passing whim; as we may explain.

The land is a natural grant of wealth to humanity at large, direct from God. It confers upon the man who cultivates and loves it the most substantial nourishment for his blood, vivifying drinks for his tired frame, and healthy atmosphere for his lungs. It gives him linen for his clothing, the gentlest kind of existence his heart could desire, and the happiest abiding place for his family.

But there is one thing which the land does not confer. It opens no road to the rapid accumulation of industry, or the enormous profit of commerce; such as the Jews with their eternal thirst for gain desire. For their profit they are by no

means contented with the returns of agriculture; these being slow and moderate always, and sometimes painful.

"What!" says the Jew. "Two or three per cent?" In his view that may be all very well for the children—that is, the natives. For the "people of God," however, from two hundred per cent to four hundred is more appropriate, in order to be prepared for any disaster. One *must* be ready to pay out at any urgent moment, and not forget to keep a stock of base money and plate on hand, in order to dupe marauders.

The Jews willingly sojourn in any place which has already been the scene of their misery and its consequences. Whether the misery has been apparent only, or real, as it often is, their re-visit is on condition of being only for a short stay. Should it happen to them to remain sufficiently long in one place to venture on erecting a palace there, or to gather and display a pomp which may often be estimated at about double of that of one of our sovereigns, they never allow that to obscure in their minds the fact that, for them, the most sumptuous roofs are but tents when erected upon a soil other than that promised by the Lord to Abraham and his posterity.

There is an annual commemoration of the exodus from Egypt; under tents which are both real and emblematic at the same time. These periodic lamentations over the new captivity show that its accidental splendours can never cause them to renounce their own country. When Joseph was in the country of the Pharaohs he became as powerful as its kings, replacing both their power and their person; but he never abjured it. His example was never forgotten by his descendants when they became ministers of State in France, or Prime Minister in England. Nor was it forgotten in the narrow lane of a German town, where dwelt a multi-millionaire; whose wife could say in her old age, and in an unpleasant jargon which was as religiously listened to as if it had been the oracle of a Delphian priestess:

There will not be any war, because my husband will not give money to anybody.

To that country which God assigned to them for their eternal possession He formerly conducted them in working a miracle at every stage. To that country they firmly expect to return. It will also be by a miracle that they return to that Judæa which was formerly so fertile; a land flowing with milk

and honey, with the yellow tints of a superb harvest, and the verdant tints of its magnificent vines. It was a land crowned with proud cedars fragrant with voluptuous flowers; yet now sterile. It has been reduced by its conquerors and is now as a slave, restive and dumb; or as a faithful widow, always weeping for her legitimate spouse and refusing to be comforted.

4.—The famous Jewish Lament, "Song of Zion" (twelfth century).

We cannot here forbear citing the famous "Song of Zion," which dates from the twelfth century. Written a thousand years after the dispersion of the Jews, it is still, as it was then, the most lively expression of their feeling. We must remind the reader that this a mere translation in prose of a translation in verse, recently published in Germany for the benefit of Jews who do not understand Hebrew. It cannot therefore be expected to give more than a very feeble idea of the original. For ourselves, we should estimate it as about equivalent to a proof taken from a coloured chalk drawing, in which only the faintest suggestions of the most accentuated points appear.

Yet, feeble as it is, this outline may suffice to give some idea of the spirit actuating the original production.

"The Song of Zion."

Though thy woes, Oh, Zion, may be like to those which the eagles and jackals during dark nights lament in the ruins, I have dreamed that your day had come!

My soul was at once pervaded by the delights of a divine music.

My soul longs for the places where formerly Jacob saw the angel face to face and on which rest the favour and predilection of the Lord.

For there it is that the Lord has built the doors of this earth, and there it is that the door of heaven shall open.

Not by the light of the sun are they illuminated, but by the uncreated light of the face of God Himself.

My happiness would be, there to pour out my soul till it dissolved entirely in tears. To drag myself to that holy spot and there to prostrate myself where the prophets saw the heavens open.

The fragments of my shattered heart would for ever attach themselves to those of humiliated Zion; and, oh joy! I should kiss its stones and nourish myself with the dust of those abandoned fields.

I should go to Hebron where the Patriarchs repose; in order to delight my soul, there on the mountain where Moses and Aaron, like the sun, reflected the rays of the Spirit of God.

Thy breezes, oh Zion! quench the thirst like a precious wine. Thy very dust is to my palate as a fragrant spice. The water of thy torrents is sweeter than honey and sherbet.

The highest bliss would be to go naked, without sandals and with head uncovered to those sacred horizons which once saw the Cherubims keep watch before the Ark of the Covenant; there to curse the cruel derisions of history by which we, valorous lions crowned with glory, have been delivered over to packs of unholy dogs.

How can I be sound in body and joyous in spirit? How can I take pleasure in eating and drinking? How can I rejoice at break of day whilst vile ravens oppress the eagles of the mountains?

But thou art beautiful, oh Zion, and thy sons are always faithful. Thy salvation alone can make them smile; thy misfortune alone call forth their tears.

When they send up their prayers to the Lord they turn to Thee within the walls of their darkest dungeons. Dispersed in the plains or the valleys it is only of Thy misery they suffer.

Sing on your frivolous songs, profane people. Their beauty will vanish like sorcery; for what, O Lord, can equal in the eyes of Thy servants Thy Urim and Thummim?*

The sacred songs of Thy priests endure, and the words of thy sages never cease to make themselves heard. That which the worshippers of false gods meditate will vanish as shadow.

Happy then the man, oh Lord, who, strong and faithful, waits for Thy glory to reappear and burst forth upon Thy people. A thousand times happy the man, oh Lord, who will see and rejoice in Thy miracles in Zion, the well-beloved, re-endowed with youth and hope.

What energy of sentiment, what vigour of expression preserved in the land of exile, far from all material reminders of the native land!

When the Romans had conquered Greece they treated it very differently from Syria, given over henceforth to consternation. The Parthenon was not destroyed, as was the Temple of Solomon. No unclean animal was placed on the gates of Athens, as was the case at Jerusalem. Yet the Greeks did not trouble

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* Name of two precious stones which the High Priest wore upon his breast and which signify Light and Justice.

themselves about preserving their literary works of art; although these were fortunate enough to find a home in the library of Alexandria.

But did the odes of Pindar find followers like the Psalms of David? And did Hesiod find among his people, twenty-five, thirty and forty centuries after him, interpreters; as did Moses? A Maimonides and his son, for instance, just to mention one name.

Where shall we look for an Arabian populace who have carefully collected the poetry cultivated with such profusion within the walls of the Alhambra? Where, again, is the conquered people who have never accepted their *væ victis*, except in the sense of a debt which must one day be paid to them?

If we are surprised that a Venetian nobleman should enter, in his account book, an offence received, with the intention of not balancing the entry until the debt has been settled by death of the debtor's son; how shall we measure our surprise at an entire nation which is similarly mindful of what it considers to be a debt, and keeps its record of the indebtedness open for thousands of years?

5.—The Jew in association with Christians.

What therefore is there to astonish us in the conduct of these noble outcasts, out of favour with their Lord? They have been conquered in name, but they have never given their consent to that idea. It cannot therefore be surprising that they should never for a moment have abjured their age-long wanderings, in their love for this sacred Palestine. With a force of character which has always kept its standard of loftiness, they have always shut their eyes and ears to all delights which might be offered them, by skies, landscapes, or any manifestation of nature which was not their own. They have never consented to admire, to appreciate and love, or to sing in praise of such beauty; despising everything, execrating everything, even to the seas and horizons which separate them from their own land of Canaan.

Against the rays of a strange sun they have closed their soul, their eyes—their very shutters. They have prayed to their God whilst turning their back upon the detested countries of

the Occident—that Occident darkened by shadows rendering it easier to catch a glimpse in imagination of their beloved Orient. They have passed their lives in revolting poverty and reeking filth; not sweeping abominable accumulations from before their door in order to foist upon the Christians the care of avoiding the infection which threatened. They have preferred abstinence and fasting, to emaciate their bodies by privation, to become sickly and enfeebled, to have their voices soured, their muscular strength reduced and their race emaciated for want of light and air—all this in the midst of riches, and all because of their refusal to join in any happiness out of Zion.

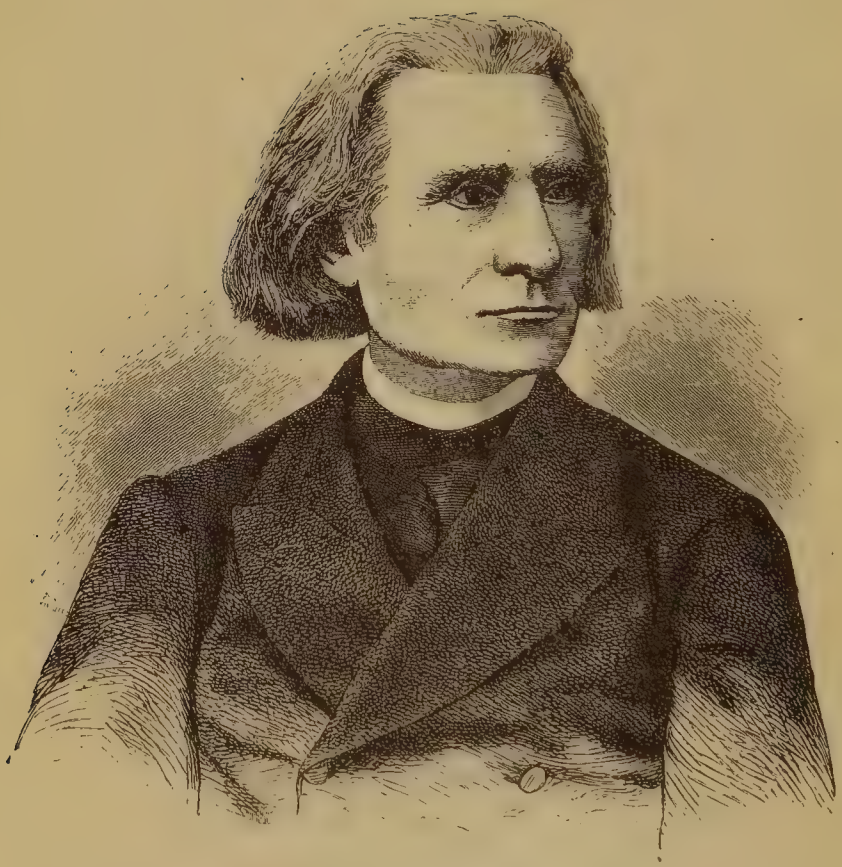
They, these carnal Jews, have indeed practised mortification and austerity with a mad perseverance. They have lived among disgusting surroundings, sometimes close to where the bodies of executed criminals remained exposed, occupying mere dog-holes, refusing to cleanse the dung-laden paving-stones of their streets, and so severely cramping the space of their habitations as to compel themselves to breathe one another's exhalations. They have done all this rather than accept the slightest foretaste of those pleasures to which they look forward with such frenzy, such long-restrained ardour and such compressed hope. The glory of that day when at last *their* God shall lead them back into *their* country.

They, these carnal Jews, have made well-being inferior to outlawry; and considered it unworthy of their high birth to take part in the sensualities of their revilers. Against any man of their race who may have become contaminated by union with a Gentile woman they have secretly declared sacrilege; and have completely disinherited him, in view of the day of revenge. With Jeremiah they have repeated that the approach of any stranger to a woman of their race is the "abomination of desolation." They have cursed with sterility the heirs of those who may have introduced a bastard race into their sacred ranks, and declared that there shall never enter any such illegitimate offspring into their Zion regained.

Inspired by unshakable faith, sublime hope and an immovable hatred, they have concentrated all the interest of their existence upon the search for means to satisfy these crowning passions. This accounts for their having thrown themselves with fury, and to the exclusion of all pardon or remission, into money-getting by duplicity and deceit.

At certain moments of truce in persecution or respite in suffering some characters among them became softened by such repose. This was especially the case when the principles of equality and fraternity, being loudly proclaimed by modern societies, caused a certain falling off in the foregoing sentiments and engagements. Then, the doctors of the law, who are the real masters in the synagogue, allowed the corruption of souls to go on; just as they would have allowed the corruption of bodies during the pestilential spread of some epidemic scourge.

The only result of this was that, in their estimates, they recognised that their people had diminished by so many. They did this relying upon the hope that the blessed wombs of their women would soon repair such waste; even if, for that purpose, they should all, like Rebecca, bear only twins; for the posterity of Abraham can never fail in the face of God's word. They ceded therefore absolutely nothing, either in their inner conscience or in their outward teachings—either of their beliefs, their remembrances, their hatreds, or their hopes.



FRANZ LISZT.

CHAPTER IV.

Artistic Standpoint of the Jew.

1.—The Jew's spiritual outlook.

WAIT, wait, still wait, and for ever go on waiting: such is the Jewish watchword.

Wait for the promised Messiah who will gather them in his suite and lead them back to Solomon's Temple; then risen from its ashes, its ruin and its dust. He will lead them back; whilst after him will follow enchained, humiliated and covered with confusion, all those peoples who, for so long and without pity, have given to them, the people of God, stones for bread and serpents for fish.

They have reserved the enjoyment of the gifts of this life and of this world for the moment of His coming; He Who is to establish them in the most magnificent palaces, to refresh them with the rarest wines, appease them with the choicest banquets, entertain them with the most brilliant spectacles, occupy them with the most varied transitions, endow them with the loveliest women; as well as with an abundance of gold, silver, precious stones, balm, perfume, nectar and ambrosia—crowning all with the supreme gift of immortality. Death, which had no existence at the beginning, shall equally have none at the end. The virtuous patriarch, the holy saint, shall go no more to "sleep with their fathers." They shall live—live always and never die. From the moment of the Messiah's coming, Death, the hideous, the ignoble, the nauseous, will have disappeared. It is by this sign that we shall know the Son of David, prophesied by Isaiah and promised by Daniel;

that, with his coming, Death is conquered and exists no more. As long as men continue to be born only to die, the Messiah is not here, and the cries of St. Paul:

> Oh Grave! Where is thy victory?
> Oh Death! Where is thy sting?

are but so many vain words, the mere exclamation of a spiritualistic dreamer who accepts as reality what none can either see or touch.

Having refused to believe in the Nazarene who promised a kingdom not of this world, the Jews wait with a tenacity which commands respect for the coming of a Messiah; who is to establish for them a kingdom in this world, and give them a voluptuousness of which Solomon never dreamt. It is to embrace every earthly joy—pride, pomp, glory, eternally smiling surroundings, festivals without end, intoxicating dances and imposing processions.

Such is the Jew's expectation; instead of those impalpable beatitudes which no one has ever seen or knows anything about, and which can only be entered upon through the dark and terrifying portals of death.

2.—Unchangeability of the Jewish character.

We cannot go so far as to say that each individual of the race carries within himself a clear and explicit notion of every motive which goes to characterise his people as a whole. But the special object of national sentiment is to inspire the actions of just those very persons who are unable to give account of motives. It does this by forming in them a habit so deeply inculcated from the most tender childhood upwards, that at last, and quite independently of thought, it forms nothing less than an imperious instinct.

This nation whose very name is still a byword, synonymous with a free mixture of bad faith and sordid interest, is nevertheless (and especially in our own day) to be seen well established in the great capital cities. The conditions under which they live there are diametrically opposed to those disdainful denials of charity from which, in those very cities, they have suffered for centuries.

But there are other countries more or less separated from Europe where they also live. There, they still have a special dress, exclusive foods, an abject exterior, and the special bearing of a people proscribed by history and by law. There also they are to be seen keeping, as intact as a credit bound to be honoured, the poetry of their sincere faith; that of their power of endurance and of their irreconcilable hatred of the worshippers of the Crucified. It is in such places as these that we see the Jews practically remaining what they were in the Middle Ages. They are still the dissimulating, astute, supple, intelligent and clever enemies of a society whose vices they stimulate, in order to draw its life-blood. A society whose resources they suck and drain whilst chuckling over its weakness; precisely as if each such folly was a victory for them, and one therefore to be entered on the credit side of their account.

On the other hand the children of Judah, and schismatics descended from Jeroboam, have not always been so persecuted; even in the Middle Ages. Having learned how to get themselves regarded as a necessary evil, they acquired a reserve of power and wealth; by flattering the holders of each of these advantages and drawing profit from them at the same time. In this way they managed at last so to infiltrate society as to seem to have become an integral portion of it.

But this only lasted until some unlucky chain of circumstances put an end to their provisional security. Then, all the old indignation was revived and the objurgation of which they were really the object reappeared.

Considerable intervals of repose have, however, been enjoyed by them in this way. Years, comparatively without suffering, have been passed by them; at one time in France, at another in Portugal, or Spain, or Holland; and such years have always been rapidly turned to good account for their prosperity. Sometimes under one king, sometimes under another, they have been in the enjoyment of unheard-of riches and luxury—ostensible but precarious. It must here, however, be recorded to their credit that they were no more spoilt by good fortune than they were cast down by adversity. The time of prosperity had no more effect in quickening their good feeling or reducing their cherished hatreds than that of persecution had had; when they were being decimated by fire and sword.

Thus, neither adversity nor prosperity could affect their

firmness of soul. That is true. But there came a time when Christian civilisation was no longer satisfied with merely protecting the Israelites behind the chains of their Ghetto,* where they were obliged to remain by the edicts of its rulers. Then it was that Europe in general invited them to take a seat at its banquets; and, when fraternising with them, it offered them a share in all its rights and privileges. It opened to them alike its sources of work and existence, of art and science, and of politics and legislation. It decided to share everything with them—table, bed, fashion, society, enterprise and dignity. There was in fact nothing more possible to be offered to them; unless it were a royal crown or the presidency of a republic.

Then, indeed, there were many deserters who forgot their origin; so much so that in Central Europe the symptoms of their character (always regarded as indelible) seemed on the point of eclipse. The barriers which prejudice had erected seemed to be falling one by one; this lively population feeling no longer obliged to conceal its opulence from envious eyes. On their side, too, the ill-feeling seemed to be disappearing and there was every sign of their having forgotten their revenge.

Yet notwithstanding the difficulty standing in the way of discovering from those who share these sanguine views of our civilisation (and who distribute benefits freely and indiscriminately amongst the poor) a trace of the real feeling nourished in the ghettos of Rome or Frankfort, we may take for granted that the sacred traditions are there well guarded by the Rabbis. In the event of any fatal and unforeseen catastrophe arising to throw them back into the old disgrace, we may be sure of the reserve of Hebrew blood which would there be found. And that the blood fermented under the desert sun—the blood of Jacob flowing in the heart of his twelve sons would cause

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* This word "Ghetto," which more particularly at Rome than elsewhere designates the quarter where during the persecutions the Jews were required exclusively to dwell, is derived from the Hebrew word for divorce; "ghet" being the letter by which a man announced to his wife her repudiation. Doubtless therefore it was the Jews themselves who gave this designation to their streets; attaching to it the secret meaning of eternal separation from the idolaters, as well as with the fixed intention of giving their quarter a repulsive name calculated to keep Christians away by disgust—since they had not the power to do so by force.

them to rejoice once again, as at the exodus from Egypt; and to celebrate by a sacred festival the death of the first-born of their impious tyrants.

The nucleus of the nation has not changed by a single atom, either this way or that. True Israelites remain exactly what they were. They are still sullen under their perfunctory loquacity, and malevolent under their apparent desire to serve. They are often cruel beneath a deceitful servility, and always preserve their real character in spite of all their abjurations or feigned alliances.

It is in this way that, sombre, hostile, but attractive, like the dull and deadly glance of the fabulous serpent, Judaism has passed through the insults and torments heaped upon it by the Middle Ages. It is in the same way that it is passing through the benefits with which it has been endowed by modern times.

3.—Hebrew cultivation of Literature.

By an inconceivably energetic organisation, as restored on its emergence from severe persecution, no sooner had a couple of generations of the Jews found the respite sufficient to enable them to banish the spectres of hunger and death with each returning day, then they made a new departure. This consisted in starting to produce great theologians, great metaphysicians, philosophers and scholars; whose erudition fixes us with astonishment by its colossal character, as well as by its minuteness and multiplicity of detail. From them have issued great names, in the most arduous sciences as well as in the most diverse branches of human knowledge, among whom may also be counted some remarkable writers and admirable poets. So high has been their estimation alike of the science of piety and piety of science, and their devotion to intelligence, talent and every kind of mental superiority, that their achievements put the Christians to shame. The Jews have a special respect for such spiritual gifts, as proceeding immediately from God; and this feeling leads these "carnal" Jews to pay particular honour to such recipients as favoured by heaven.

That being so, a family alliance with their scholars and

poets is amongst them in very particular request; more value being attached to such union than to that with any fortune or amount of wealth. The greatest among them (that is to say the richest or those whose genealogy was the best known) formerly esteemed it the greatest honour to marry their daughters to men devoted to speculative labour and thus completely removed from the routine of practical life, the care of which they left to their wives. An emulation even existed amongst the most powerful of them as to who could secure for his family an alliance with the greatest celebrities; and, in this connection, the curious feature may be mentioned of young men who had acquired early renown being abducted; just as, amongst ourselves, young women are sometimes abducted. It was hoped by this means to induce these young men to marry heiresses, and thus render the family to which they belonged illustrious by alliance with it.

Even now, as soon as one amongst them becomes seriously devoted to sacred science, study of the Talmud, the Mischna, the Gamahra, the scrutiny of their significations, or relative value of the versions extant, a guardian is appointed; in order that he may not have to trouble himself to provide for his table, or bed, or wife, or children. This guardian is at least a millionaire; who, when the learned Rabbi wishes to travel for purposes of study, pays the expense of the journey. Should the Rabbi, moreover, desire to buy rare and precious books, the guardian pays also for the books; and will do so even if they should cost a king's ransom. It may happen, too, that the Rabbi has works of his own in Chaldean or Syriac which he may desire to print. In that case the guardian provides for the fount of characters, the fabrication of the paper—in fact for all expenses, even should they amount to an immense fortune. Such is his duty; for is he not guardian to a celebrity?

The same kind of thing happens when Jews come to Europe to become familiar with its life; say, to Paris or Munich, to England or Italy. The Christian world, in short, has never succeeded in corrupting this race, which is so impossible to corrupt that it always zealously guards some retreat exclusively for itself; where it can thoroughly preserve its integrity, and where it can be found to-day the same as it was yesterday and will be to-morrow. All this happens quite irrespective of our thinking that we have converted it to any of our vices,

or caused it to long for our paltry ambitions; or to think it intoxicated with our adulterated wines.

It is now nearly two hundred years since the Jews emerged from the narrow circle of their Hebrew studies; biblical, talmudistic, cabbalistic, philosophical or therapeutic. Without then entirely renouncing the moderate degree in which these studies had always been exercised by them, and whilst continuing semitic and philological studies (but especially medicine) they nevertheless ceased to cultivate sciences which seemed to be losing ground. When, accordingly, homeopathy exposed the cheap mystery of the ordinary medical prescription, and when also it became a matter of no small personal suffering to put up with the small earnings obtainable from natural science, these were deserted by them also; and there was a general onset made upon the various branches of criticism and general literature.

This new movement was so pronounced as to amount to a demonstration; and an incalculable number of workers were started in the fields both of polite literature and journalism. Like a swarm of grasshoppers they invaded the press, took possession of periodical publications, seized the direction of ideas, and seemed to have leased the right to deal out public opinion. So, at long last, the Christians discovered that, in their own country, they had allowed themselves to be ejected from the two principal sources of wealth and power. These are—monetary commerce as represented by banking, and the commerce of thought as represented by the press. And it was not merely that they had been ejected; but the ejection had been stealthily effected by those who, while calling themselves French, German or English, remained simply Israelites.

This fact, as the product of abnormal circumstances, is itself abnormal; and is capable of some day giving rise to a violent reaction. It might even be that the long history of persecutions suffered by these exiles from Judæa has not yet come absolutely to an end. Let us hope that their memory may not be revived; and that such reaction as may happen may bring with itself some solution of the problem.

The Gipsies and their Music

4.—Hebrew cultivation of Art.

The Jews have also cultivated art, and have naturally concluded by invading it. But, after reviewing all their sentiments for about twenty centuries and taking severe care not to allow anything to come to the surface (thus rendering still more acute their adroitness in cozenage and fraud) they have only been able to exercise and practise art as they have astrology—that is to say, as the result of study only. This means that they neither believed in it themselves, nor did they trouble to understand what those thought who really did believe in it.

In the result they have never known how it is that art actually *creates* by force of inspiration. They have never realised that to pronounce the word "art" is precisely the same thing as if the word uttered were "creation." It is only in the next stage that we have formation of the idea; yielding contents of the work which become manifest in the course of its execution. The final stage (which concerns its multiplication and imitation) takes us from the domain of art into that of industry.

To practise art and even to practise it successfully is, however, not the same as possessing the supreme power of creation. To create is to call into being from nothing; it is to give a new form to a feeling already known; an aspect as yet unknown to an expression which is familiar. To "practise" art is simply to vary the tonality of sentiments already expressed, the contexture of forms already existing, the modulation of tints which are already there. The genius sings by virtue of a personal inspiration in whatever way it dictates and suggests; but talent can only retouch what others have already said. The talent may be extraordinary, but it is not an initiator. Between creating and innovating there is the same difference as between genius and talent; the same as between Bach and Mendelssohn, or Beethoven and Meyerbeer.

The Israelites have never produced anything really new; for the reason that what they have sung has never been their own sentiment. They have been in the habit of sealing up every movement of their heart, with a religious silence as far as they were concerned, but a silence intended contemptuously as towards others; and, never having been able to cast this off, how would it have been even possible for them to confide those feelings to art? Before they could do that, it would

have been necessary for them to unlearn feigning to the Christians; an idea which would never so much as occur to them. The views which they had so long entertained about their inherent nobleness, elevation and general superiority, as compared with others, would have prevented them. In short, their religion of silence would never have permitted them to express the aspirations of their souls, to chant the sufferings of their hearts, or to detail the throbbings of their passions, loves or hatreds, in the language of the ideal.

Those mysterious cords, which were preserved by their fathers with such profound silence from all profane regard, they have never dared to set in vibration. Had they done so they would have been fearful of betraying something of their inextricable traditions, of their talmudical legends, of the mysticism of their cabbal, or of the phantasmagoria of their secret imaginings. They have been unwilling to repeat before a derisory audience words full of virtue which human utterance would have desecrated; words full of magic which the pontiffs repeated only to the solemnly initiated. Those sublime images would have been profaned by the eye of the adolescent, and those axioms only issued from trembling lips to sink into the ear of a terrified listener. There were versicles, too, which were never pronounced except by those whose lips were vowed to silence.

The fear was always before their eyes of allowing some crevice in their secret archives to appear. There were facts entered only in their unknown chronicles, there were dramas the memory of which is buried in accounts which they keep by double entry, and there were tragic stories which have brought them sudden protections and connivances from high quarters.

There was also the fear of revealing examples of cruel reprisals the terrors of which they hold up before the weak and hesitating. There were cases of danger incurred by their chiefs in order to save those who were most exposed. Finally, there were instances of judgments pronounced by their Rabbis as between litigants who, disputing the decisions of Gentile courts, would not even accept a gain accorded to them against one of their own, unless and until it was confirmed by their own justice and in accordance with their own faith.

Of their unexampled tribulations, moreover, never a word. Their unnameable miseries, their indescribable sufferings, their

numberless griefs, their concentrated threats, their sacred promises—of all these, never a word. Of their perspective of the future, their coming glories, their confidence in Jehovah, their certitude of revisiting Mount Sinai and Mount Horeb, as of returning to the land of the twelve tribes, never a word. Of re-embracing the blessed soil, mingling their tears of joy with the waters of Cedron, and their cries with those of the eagles of Liban—of re-possessing Jerusalem, Jerusalem the great, the holy—of all these things never a word. No love of art could induce them to risk instructing the Gentiles upon any of these mysteries of their faith, so jealously kept away from our mocking and sardonic regard.

It follows that they have produced neither an architecture, a school of painting, or of music; neither songs nor poems which could be considered *national*, and which would therefore have revealed to us the sort of feeling possessed by these men of an iron faith—men with such prodigious hopes, who gild their darksome days with a light invisible to other eyes.

Shall we be told that Mendelssohn has composed the oratorio of "Elijah," or that Halévy has produced the opera of "La Juive"? Or that Bendemann has painted "The Jews weeping on the banks of the Euphrates," and that another has given us a theatrical representation of Solomon in all his glory? If so, we need only ask—what is there herein essentially Jewish? Neither the sentiment nor the form. That oratorio, that opera, that painting, and that play would all have been thought out and felt in precisely the same way by Christians. But, on the other hand, who would venture to deny that the Jews really do possess a sentiment which is essentially their own, and which cannot incorporate itself otherwise than in a form completely their own—absolutely their own? If, therefore, they do not reveal themselves in the world of art, it must be that they do not choose to do so; that they cannot do so.

In practising art the fact is that the Jews had no desire to sing their own songs—not even to one another. What they aimed at was to become skilful in the Christian manner. They wanted even to surpass the Christians in skill; but only in those arts which suited their moral, intellectual and material capacities; for they were extremely careful not to cultivate all indiscriminately. Architecture, for instance, would have required too complete an identification with Christian beliefs,

ideas and manners. It would have been to them a horror to erect churches, town-halls or monuments of any sort; they would have even considered it unworthy of their high descent to have to erect any kind of Christian dwelling. They preferred to ask the Christians to erect even their own synagogues for them; considering that these are to them mere temporary shelters, mere tents of stone, serving only till the day when the People of God shall return to Palestine and raise again the stones of Zion. Sculpture would have required too much physical strength for these feeble constitutions, these nervous temperaments, devoid of muscular energy as those are always who lead sedentary lives.

They chose therefore those other arts which handle softer materials, and which exact from the artist less originality of conception, by providing an occupation in which artifice and art are joined. In them an industrious individuality can make itself felt without such rude workings as are called forth by arts of which stone constitutes the base; and without calling upon them for a physical strength which they do not possess, such as dancing; as well as without expecting from them any convictions, whether political or other, involving a necessity for eloquence which is a gift they even more completely lack.

They tried their hands at painting, and occasionally made some effect. At the theatre, too, they excelled in all branches, becoming successful playwrights, popular poets and famous actors. There were many of them quite distinguished at the footlights and they could claim many names applauded by the crowd. In tragedy, especially, they had actors and actresses of the highest class—as well as an immense number of the mediocre.

But all this was secondary to their exploitation of music, in which they achieved a brilliant success.

CHAPTER V.

The Reason of Jewish Artistic Isolation.

1.—The pro and con of Jewish musical activity.

OF music the Jews directed their attack upon every kind, both in execution and composition. In course of this campaign they had had some reputations so brilliant that they were generally thought to be on the point of becoming grandiose. But they never succeeded in maintaining themselves at the level which the prestige of their early success seemed to indicate for the future. Such success, however, was quite justified at the time; for, whether as virtuosi or composers, it depended on manipulation of the form, and that was unquestionably marvellous. Their extension of it and method of rendering it more supple were both effected in virtue of that tendency to combine which is the essence of the genius of their race. In the domain of harmony, as of instrumentation, they have taken up ingenious and fertile points of view; finding therein new resources, as elsewhere. They have always done not only well, but often better than others had done before them. In this respect their invasion of the sphere of musical art must be considered both fruitful and useful. Their service has also been as great in helping to propagate and generalise it, as in the adroit manipulation of its material.

Who can say what would be the condition of music nowadays, or whether we should even yet be able to understand the genius of our great masters any better than we did during their life-time—who knows whether we should even yet be able to execute their great works, but for the insinuating, enter-

prising, bold and obstinate spirit of the members of this nation? It was alike in the interpretation of these great works upon their instruments with commendable self-esteem, in commenting upon them in their writings, and in causing echoes of them to reverberate in their productions, that they helped to spread the taste for them and increase their appreciation. They limited themselves to an intelligent copy, it is true; but their desire was to copy the best we had, and they knew how to recognise it. Who would dare to say that, without them, music would have become such an imperious want of our society as it is actually?

Music, more than any other manifestation of human thought, requires for its full display (such as takes place at theatres and festivals) the transfer of considerable funds. If the commercial foresight of the Jews had not taken up the matter, where amongst ourselves should we have found our Mæcenas-type with sufficient respect and enthusiasm for art to supply their absence? Would our plutocrats have had either enough faith in art or enough love for it to risk their capital in its service? Our rich burghers are all for self-indulgence and have no use for art; which, however much intelligence may honour its forms, will never evoke from the vulgar who wallow in riches any desire for or appreciation of what is beyond its very lowest expression.

It cannot be disputed that the Jews developed both life and movement in this sphere of civilisation, which in these later times has gained such unexpected importance. It has become an integral part of education in every social grade; from the royal houses where we have seen hereditary princes competing with the professional virtuoso, to the working classes who enrol themselves in choral societies.

Moreover, music now forms also an integral part of every grade of social existence. There is no one of these which, in this nineteenth century, can entirely dispense with operas and concerts, piano and singing, chamber music or part-singing. It is equally a necessity in towns during the winter, as in the country during the summer. It is in use at all solemn and public festivals, in all private family celebrations, and in the everyday habits of usual life. It is in demand for the young and gay to laugh and dance to, as an assistance to the meditations of the serious and to the reflections of the old. Each rank of society will henceforth feel its want, just as it will

always need gardens and galleries. And the want must be supplied in a quantity which is frequently enormous, as well as of such exquisite quality as to render the fact of its being available often extraordinary.

But they had no sooner arrived on this ground than they commenced to raise an agitation—to use the English expression. They acquired a controlling interest in the press; and, by the use of exploiting influences such as those of coterie and comradeship, they were able to say with Molière:

Et nul n'aura de talent hormis nous et nos amis.*

Their activity attracted so much general attention to this subject that Christian curiosity was much aroused; but, after all was said and done, it was bound to be acknowledged that our art was considerably indebted to them. Although some abuses had been mixed up with their action all reproaches were stifled by the reflection of how much more disastrous a complete stagnation would have been.

The onward movement of musical art has been much favoured by Jewish participation in it; being thereby enriched with superior talents and names of great celebrity. It is even doubtful whether, without their having taken this share in its "business," music would have arrived at the flourishing condition in which it now is. There would therefore be neither good faith nor dignity in declining to recognise what we owe them in this respect.

Considered in bulk, however, their success was not always merited. The press has much overstated the achievements of certain composers; and completely gone beyond those of many virtuosi. But, here again, the art has been none the less a gainer. There has been an enormous number of virtuosi of which each one posed as a prodigy and insisted on being recognised as such. They were like those composers who were rich enough to take the high hand, and, as it were, command their own celebrity; instead of having to solicit favours by chance.

Among the artists of all nations we must remember that it is those who are the least sure of posterity who are the most sure of themselves and of the moment. And that the Jews are

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* And there shall be nobody of talent except ourselves and our friends.

the only nation capable of providing individuals already gifted, as it were, with "eminence." They provide these in the musical world just as, in the financial world, they provide those gifted with financial eminence—millionaires at a stroke. It follows, therefore, that they are also the only nation to offer us examples of what may be called the "happy genius," as well as the first to show us how to have, at one and the same time, a great talent and a great fortune. From them we may also learn how to do honour simultaneously to your art and your social position; and how to be as much at home in a drawing-room as before the public—in the orchestra, as at the court.

It was a double progress; for it was one in both art and manners. It was also a gain in both; though it is difficult to say in which the gain was the more extensive; whether it was art which, by the aid of these its representatives, took up a more advanced position in life and the spirit of the age, identified itself more closely with social pulsations and caught up, at the moment of their greatest warmth the aspirations of the time; or whether it was society which thus learned to ennoble its impulses, to poetise its own feelings, to elevate its own ideal, to purify its impressions, however fugitive, and to embellish its every emotion by accustoming itself to love the beautiful for its own sake.

To love the beautiful for its own sake became henceforth to consider the beautiful in music as an indispensable luxury for the great, the noble, and the rich; and to regard it as an indispensable article of consumption in the world, like an industrial production indispensable in commerce.

2.—Imitative character of all Jewish musical production.

Exactly as, at the theatre and in painting, the Jew's art in music is cut and trimmed to the Christian pattern. He does not even try to free himself from our methods; showing no wish to avoid copying our masters, or any desire to speak other sentiments or vibrate any other chords than ours. Meyerbeer never dreamed of emancipating himself from the Italian school, which he started off by copying; nor from the German

school, to which he gave his attention at a later period. All he did was to unite them—to place them in juxtaposition.

That, however, was a new combination; one which had never before been seen. But, although it enabled Meyerbeer to reap an unexampled popularity, it was nothing more than a combination. He could not assimilate the prodigious melodic energy of Rossini; because he lacked that inexhaustible source of inspiration which appertained to the Southern Italian feeling. Nor could he rise to any equality with Beethoven; for want of that composer's endless fund of Northern German sentiment. All he could do, therefore, was to improve on Mercadente in the one case and on Weber in the other.

Mendelssohn is another instance. He did no other than Handel; going beyond him only in the employment of more modern means, which indeed was indispensably required for adaptation to the habits of our audiences and to the acquisitions of our orchestration. Much the same may be said of all Jewish composers who sought to gather similar laurels and enjoy, during their life-time, the same kind of glory; for they all followed precisely the same procedure as these two. In short the Jews only aspire to become agents for the purpose of combining and splicing the elements which we create.

It would not be possible for them to assimilate our ideal so completely as to enable them to produce works emanating from an inspiration truly original, or from a feeling truly and exclusively their own. They could not do that without having first repudiated from father to son the acrid ferment of their blood. They would have first to renounce all the heat, energy and enthusiasm of their instincts and all the grandeur of their unchangeable protest against entire humanity; that humanity which does not in the least recognise any of the Jewish professed rights of supremacy and priority over it. This could not be more completely shown than by the fact that it was the most clement of the emperors who destroyed Jerusalem, inflicting upon it cruelties more frightful than history has elsewhere to relate; Jerusalem the proud, whose children were forbidden to return to it even to bewail their misfortune.

As long as the Israelites will persist in considering the injuries against them as unpardonable, and in nursing their disdainful spite (which, by the way, they could not abdicate without denying themselves and by their own hand striking themselves out of the list of nations living their own life) how

should they ever be able to enter into our ideas? Our ideas are of confraternity; our laws, of mercy; our precepts, of love. Our duties are of pardon, mercy and pity; whilst their heroism consists in disdaining all fellowship with the rest of men. They ignore the sweets of mercy in always fearing their God; and in abstaining from all love except that of their fathers, whilst studiously avoiding the taint of all mercy and pity.

What esteem, in fact, can the Israelites have for our ephemeral sentiments—our inconstant and inconsistent passions; which are, as it were, here to-day and gone to-morrow. Those sentiments which are so often unfaithful without cause, forgetful without scruple, and stifled without trouble? Sentiments, moreover, which are prompt to evaporate and are always prone to become extinguished? What esteem for these can *they* have, who live so solely and absolutely absorbed in the fixedness of a passionate belief, that they permit no individual desire to affect this preoccupation by introducing any personal episode whatever?

Our patriotic ebullitions must, in fact, appear to them as the merest child's-play; when God Himself has allotted to them a country which, without even knowing it, they know so well how to cherish. Our paltry individual pride, too, must seem to them as nothing, compared with the insuperable pride of an entire race. As to our ambitions of a few days, when compared with those by which they are animated from century to century—and our quarrels and revenges from person to person, or from family to family, when compared with those of a nation in divorce from the whole human race, upon whom they invoke celestial thunder, what can be thought? How do our unfruitful loves, too, appear to a people who esteem women only for their fruitfulness? And our love-makings and languishings, in comparison with the passions which determine their unions, and which they envelop with a veil so thick that no Christian can tell how they love, how they desire, or in what their happiness consists?

Now, when a certain kind of heroism has been handed down for three thousand years, it has become completely infiltrated with the veins of a people. Then, even should it happen to any individual amongst them to be seduced by glory, prestige, excitements or the love of others, sufficiently to repudiate it, we cannot expect the first such apostate to disengage himself wholly from such hereditary sorrows. Even if he would, he

could not so far forget a hatred and a hope of vengeance so long transmitted from father to son and from mother to daughter as a patrimony, to become penetrated with a heroism drawn from regions of the heart which are entirely different.

3.—The question of a separate Jewish school.

One might imagine that the Jews, as self-invited guests of the entire world, had at least decided that, when the time should arrive for them to have their own home, they would also have their own school of art. Should any of them then, and in their own country, consent to adopt the language of ideality for the expression of their sentiments and passions, one might fairly look for some inspiration to kindle in their works. Then, at last, would it thunder their anger, sigh their complaints, and explode their imprecations as feeling might require. Then, at last, would it take flight upon the vast outspread wings of their tremendous hopes; and eventually break out into that bluish livid flame so appropriate for strains issuing in imagination from lips already dried up with bitterness, though still ardent with fury.

Thus to startle the hearts of the co-religionists—thus to have at last made it possible for brethren of the artist to cease regarding his work merely as one more trade robbed from the Christian, or as another irony cast at his poor efforts, would cause them to be seized with fright. To hear their own sentiments and their own passions expressed through an ideal medium they would be stupefied—if not petrified. To see, even now, *before* the coming of their Messiah, their abjection turned to glory—their very poverty honoured! To hear their temperance praised, their sorrows chanted, and their very rags held up to respect as precious relics! To know their avarice regarded merely as a form of wisdom, and their servilities only as a temperamental weakness! And, finally, to see their bleeding wounds recognised as the result of barbarous outrage, to witness the veneration of their treatment, and to submit whilst the stigmata of their humiliations are bathed with perfume!

So far indeed has Christian art really gone, betimes, in a task which, if not quite similar, is at least analogous. Shakes-

peare created Shylock; and Walter Scott Abraham; not to mention others. Rembrandt also painted the Rabbi of Amsterdam; for the European painter, as well as the poet and romancer, has always been struck with admiration. Their attention has been arrested by the grandeur of Jewish types, the Semitic character of their features and the Oriental style of their dress. They have been charmed by the aspect of the Jewish women, so beautiful, so intelligent, and so devoted. They have been mystified by accounts of luxury, studiously kept away from our admiring but envious glances, as well as by descriptions of their antique symbolical rites. Thus, the spectacle of their imperturbable beliefs united with obsequious flattery, and of their weakness united with ostentation, form a picture; which, supported by a background of strength of soul capable of defying the severest torments, was well worthy of admiration.

But how shall we now proceed to describe what goes on meantime in the soul of these sons of the Midi? these daughters of the Levant? We, who are as of yesterday, children of the North, cold and lymphatic, plunged in the shadow of the setting sun! We, with our souls enervated by the arrogance of prosperity and domination, by the paltry egotism of our futile pursuits and by the deleterious action of our vain infatuations! We, with our constant illusion by false respect and false shame, our twin deceptions of false grandeur and false humility as of those of false abnegation and false pleasure! We are like one of those tall evergreens which has been so often trimmed into artificial form by the shears of the gardener that, at last, it has forsaken its natural growth; and no longer sprouts, except in accordance with the imposed limit.

Thus, when those who believe that Palestine awaits them as its liberators choose to smile at descriptions of our loves and hatreds, there is nothing we can do but bow our heads in silence.

4.—Account of a Jewish ceremony.

Once, and once only, has it happened to us to, as it were, catch a glimpse and overhear what Jewish art *might* become if the Israelites were to display, within forms invented by their own Asiatic genius, all the pomp of their imagination and dreams—all the intensity of the sentiments which animate them and of the passions which they repress. It enables us to imagine what would happen were they to reveal all the ardour of their inward fire; at present damped down with such precaution, beneath ashes which are really alight, though they appear to us as quite extinguished.

At Vienna, we were acquainted with the celebrated tenor, Sulzer; who, in his capacity of Cantor in the Synagogue, had made a reputation the more distinguished through being reserved for a circle of real connoisseurs. Within this artistic organisation the regulation mask for concealment of the interior being was not so thick; so that occasionally the actual impress upon his soul caused by the secret paternal teachings might be observed.

It was common to hear him speak as if, after having squared the blocks of stone for the construction of the pyramids, he had witnessed the Egyptian darkness. He seemed to have been an eye-witness of the drowning of the impious Pharaoh and his host; and of the cloud of fire guiding the chosen people, invisible to its enemies; the latter seeming still so to shine in his eyes as to give them an emotional expression—an expression which returned in speaking of Korah, Dathan and Abiram being swallowed by the earth. His account of the sistrum and psalterion sounding together for joy in Zion, and of the tones of David's harp, was as that of one who had heard them; and he seemed equally to have known Hiram, to have visited Ophir and Sidon, and to have watched with his own eyes the Queen of Sheba mounting the steps of the legendary throne of Solomon, "leaving so much aroma behind her that for eight years the streets were still impregnated." In the same way he seemed to have listened to the songs of the captives on the banks of the Euphrates in the time of Ezekiel, the words of Nehemiah and the orders of Esdras when they raised the Temple from its ruins and when they rebuilt the Holy of Holies.

It was in order to hear him that we went to the Synagogue of which he was the musical head, and where he sustained the upper part.

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Rarely has it happened to us to be attacked by so lively an emotion; one to seize so irresistibly all the sympathetic and devotional faculties of our soul, as on that evening when, with a thousand lights dispersed like stars over a vast ceiling overhead, we became aware of a strange choir of dull guttural voices starting to sing.

Each chest seemed a sort of dungeon from the depth of which an impalpable being was emerging in order to praise the God of the Ark of the Covenant in the midst of misery and slavery. It seemed to cry to him in a voice resigned but resolute, as if sure to be delivered one day from this endless captivity; sure to be quit of this odious land with its strange rivers, and sure to escape from this new Babylon, the great whore, in order to re-enter into his own kingdom in the sight of all the terrified nations and with triumph, of a magnificence without example.

In course of hearing the Hebrew words pronounced one could easily imagine them as sombre flowers becoming detached from their stems and shedding their vibrating petals and sonorous chords throughout the air. Harsh sounds, irritating diphthongs, and rough discords, float and flutter about; scraping the air like tickling tongues of fire. The air seems specially aglow for the sense of hearing, which is assailed by burning waves, ardent breathings, and inflamed vapours; at a time when everything remains calm and pacific to the sight, and when all seems serene and tranquil in the material atmosphere.

No woman was admitted into this consecrated enclosure, as if therein the act of prayer was reserved for male courage and virile force. It was as if the communion of this chosen nation was with a God angry and firm, prompt and long in punishing, tardy and slow in his rewards; and as if, with that God, there existed a treaty; with respect to the conditions of which, whether properly carried out or not, no third party was able to judge.

For all that, however, the women thus excluded *have* counted amongst themselves souls of great strength; such as Deborah, Judith, Abigail and the mother of the Maccabees. Others

there have also been, full of grace; such as Rachael, Ruth, Bethsaba and the wife of the young Tobias. And others full of greatness, such as Hagar, Zipporah, Esther and Anna, the prophetess. It follows, therefore, that neither force, grace, nor grandeur of soul are sufficient for communion with the God of Israel; none are eligible who are not marked with the mysterious sign—the sign of blood.

Quite suddenly these men (all still bearing the seal which Abraham bequeathed to the descendants of Isaac and Ishmael) started a succession of short movements, rapid and regular, as if in order to render visible the rhythm of their apostrophes. Soon, it seemed as if the Psalms themselves were floating above our heads like spirits aflame; or like a multitude of winged Cherubims floating in space to serve as a footstool to the Most High.

Jubilant with enthusiasm, exultation and heavenly ecstasy, these majestic poems unfolded their story of the powers of the God of Abel and of Noah, of Melchizedek and Isaiah. It would have been impossible to resist associating all the sympathies of one's soul with the grand acclamation of this crowd of the circumcised; carrying on its shoulders the burden of so many ancient traditions, so many divine benefits, so many rebellions and so many adulterous infidelities. Bearers of hard punishments, but, at the same time, of unshakable hopes.

Whilst a Christian's imagination was feeling itself cast down by the weight of these remembrances which accumulated before the altar, without victim and without sacrifice—before the sacred parchments and the Holy-Books—those who made themselves victims to replace the holocausts preserved their countenances impassable; betraying neither supplication nor ecstasy, whilst their provisional sanctuary resounded with the familiar evocation, the terrible threefold name:

Adonaï! Elohim! Jehovah!

The Reason of Jewish Artistic Isolation

5.—A light from Jerusalem.

Involuntarily we then saw another picture rise before us—a picture of what was going on, at the same time, far, very far away, from the place where we then were.

It was Jerusalem which we thus saw in spirit—Jerusalem, the city of peace. Accounts which we had often heard caused us to be present in imagination at that unique spectacle in all the world which is renewed there every Friday, in an arid spot marked by a few blocks of stone. These are the vestiges of the foundations of the Temple, where the Tables of the Law once reposed, and where the symbolical candlestick with seven branches displayed its light.

As we listened with the mystic forces of our soul we suddenly caught up in imagination other intonations; in comparison with which the accents by which we were actually surrounded were rendered pale, just as a red-hot iron pales before the iron which is in white heat.

There in Jerusalem the sobs were real, drawn from the very entrails of old men; the sighs real sighs, from men in the prime of life. The strident cries were also real, from women who wrung their hands and bathed the granite of Lebanon with their tears. There it was the real howlings of despair, forced from the deep despair of all, including childhood and youth.

But, at Jerusalem, no one was ashamed of such tears or sighs; no one blushed at tearing the hair, at enforcing the nails into the cheeks, or at smiting his brow against the sacred stones. To bow down, concealing the face, to rend the garments, and to pour out ashes upon the head caused no surprise. Some were even to be found to eat the dust of the highway and to lie down upon the blessed ground and kiss it with a feverish voluptuousness; like the fiancé of yesterday might kiss the lips, mute and cold, of his bride, already dead.

Now, why should these people one and all studiously conceal from the general eye the periodical indulgences they grant to the full expression of their unnameable grief? Is not the world at large fully aware of the rigours of their God, the heartrending nature of their exile, the humiliations of their life, and the torments of their dispersion? Who is there on this earth, its immensity notwithstanding, who ignores their degradation? Let that same world, therefore, learn also their

fidelity; that fountain full of life, bubbling over and inexhaustible, of their hope—of their hope, did I say? No, of their certitude to return to the Promised Land.

We confess that this sort of second sight which we have described, though it lasted only a minute, impressed us so keenly that, with the distraction usual with strong emotions, we turned immediately round towards one of our neighbours (a learned hebraist) and remarked that it must seem very hard to the Israelites of Jerusalem to see a superb mosque erected on the very sanctuary of the Temple; so that they are prevented from shedding their tears within the site of the Temple, and can only place their lips upon the stones of its threshold.

"That does them no harm," replied he, coldly.

"The God of Israel wished to remove all human feet but those of the pontiffs from this henceforth holy place; and, therefore, if the mosque remained entirely open, no Jew would ever enter. That ground is reserved by the Law of God for the grand pontiff of the tribe of Levi who performs the service of the Temple, and none but he dare enter there under pain of sin.

"The Jews at Jerusalem lament upon the only ruins which they are permitted to touch and to embrace."

In face of this answer we could only remain silent; admiring the faith of the race far more than the music of their synagogue.

CHAPTER VI.

The Jewish Case Stated.

1.—The Jewish case as towards creative art.

IT is a fact to be admitted (because it is one of which after sufficient thought we always finish by convincing ourselves) that, however strange it may seem, it would be weakness in the Jewish people to consent to formulate in our presence those secret feelings and intimate emotions from which that individual inspiration bursts forth which we call genius—that luminous ray known to us as originality.

Why should they betray the mysteries of their heart, so long and so conscientiously hidden from our regards?

Why should they cease to have God alone for their confidant?

Why should they give to their regrets, to their constancy, and to their supernatural ideal any dress whatever—even the purple and hyacinth of art?

Why should they seek for witnesses, of that which is much the more grand for having no witnesses?

Why should they hand over the sacred heritage of their heart-rendings and maledictions to the curious incomprehension of a frivolous and brutal world, like that to which the artist addresses his divine secrets and celestial revelations? Those who might perhaps enter into their meaning are not always instructed in the language of art, and those who understand the language of art often fail to perceive the sense of it. The poetry of the Hebrew race is already complete; it stands exhaled in their Supreme Book. Who can blame them for feeling faithfully satisfied with the unequalled and inimitable

painting of the passions which they believe to be therein sanctified?

What does it matter to them that Christianity, that product of their own blood, has also an adoration for the same book?

What does it matter to them if, nowadays, as at the time of crossing the desert, there are some among them so unworthy as to prefer the onions and leeks of Egypt to the fabulous grapes which Caleb brought back from the land of Canaan? Or that (denying Moses because they think him lost) some turn to adore the golden calf, the idol of their oppressors?

Shall they trouble because the tribes of Samaria separate from Judah, or because the Karaites cut themselves off from the Talmudists?

What if there should be some disciples of Hegel or St. Simon within the fold? Or some naturalists and materialists? The Sadducees did not believe either in the immortality of the soul or in the resurrection of the body; but that did not prevent them from forming part of the people of God. Besides, so far as such men exist, write and agitate, does not that always count as so much injury done to the Christians?

Is it to be presumed in the present, any more than in the past, that *their* God can abandon the people appointed to be his, those children of the children of Abraham with whom he concluded a covenant; and all because there are some men who believe nothing, and some women who abandon themselves to all? They are certain that there will always remain a sufficient crowd of descendants of the twelve tribes to believe and hope in their Messiah, to receive him with enthusiastic acclamation, as an entire people keeping guard round the ancient tabernacle. This it is which has constituted their precious legacy, through prosperity and adversity, through glory and reverses, in their own country, as in banishment.

Therefore they sing in a chorus, of which the unison has no example, stanzas written by one of the great poets* of their exile:

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* Juda-Ha-Levi, surnamed the Castilian (1080) frequently exhibits a gentleness of character seldom found among the other glories of the vast field of modern Jewish literature; the dogmatic austerity of which (that of Salomon de Gabriol, for instance) scarcely allows of quotation.

The poetic section of this literature recalls on the whole one of those admirable pieces of wire-work of the time of Quentin-Matsys, of which the texture presented the most ingenious interlacements, perfectly designed to occupy and fascinate the imagination; but, on detaching a fragment, you would find yourself holding a mere piece of iron.

Willingly I bear the sins of all my people. With joy I offer my shoulders to their burden. Never shall I invoke any other God than Thee, O Lord, nor consent to owe my salvation to other than to Thee alone. The fear even of death shall not cause me the less to adore Thy rigorous commands.

My soul is full of zeal for Thy cause, O Lord, for I have chosen the paths which lead to Thee. Even though the flames of Thy fury should devour me, I shall never desert Thy will and Thy rule. I shall be steadfast to Thy holy alliance and take pleasure alone in Thy law and doctrine.

My strength is only in Thee, in none other do I place my trust. To no other than Thee shall I lift my eyes with love, in no other than Thee do I place my hope, even though death overtake me in doing Thy will. I will find courage to bear Thy rigours because of my trust in the promise of Thy mercy.

2.—The Jewish case as towards Christian society.

If, on the one hand, we believe in the God of the Gospel—

. . . . the God-Creator Who, having made man free, promised him, after he had sinned, to redeem him from the fall of Adam, to send him a Messiah, a Saviour, a Divine Redeemer; who, after the expiation had been accomplished, would send him in his turn the Comforter, the Illuminator, the Sanctifier; who would finally bring about the reign of God on earth—

or if, on the other hand, we believe in the God of the Pentateuch—

. . . . Who made a covenant with Abraham and, having promised him a posterity more numerous than the stars of heaven or grains of sand of the sea, with a special country which was to flow with milk and honey; and, after that, never cease to watch over the destiny of His chosen people, marking by a miracle each succeeding phase of its history—

however strong may be our belief in either of these two faiths we cannot deny that miracles altogether ceased when the veil of the Temple was rent in twain. After eighteen hundred and eighty years we are entitled to say that Providence has ceased to employ superhuman means for its chosen people, any more than for the others.

But, among ordinary means, the fanatical attachment preserved by this chosen people towards its faith and law during nearly twenty centuries and in spite of the most elegiac and tragically violent changes of exile is doubtless one capable of fulfilling the most providential designs.

What can this mean? Except that this hope, which is so

tenacious and so firmly grafted upon faith that not even the hand of the executioner can affect it, must one day be granted.

When?——How?——

That is precisely what every Israelite is forbidden by his faith to investigate; in order that his hope may not become based upon any anchor of salvation, and his faith not risk the danger of foundering in any storm.

He; the son of Isaac, a child of miracle saved by an angel at the very moment when his father's weapon was about to penetrate his heart—he; the sacred offspring of Jacob, who struggled with the angel without being overcome—he; born, chosen, chastised and so often forgiven by the intervention of miracle, he expects a miracle so confidently that he would regard any salvation as mean, which did not proceed from miracle—that is to say, from the direct intervention of his God on behalf of His people. He feels himself in God's hands; and that earth and hell united could not change his fate one hair's breadth.

His people do not dispute with the God of Gods, the Lord of heaven and earth. On Him and on Him alone his hope is fixed; his will is to turn Him to compassion by his faith and fidelity and to obtain His pardon by so complete a confidence that it disdains to seek for any wretched human help.

This enables us to see how it is and why no Israelite is allowed by his religion to extend a hand to any project which appears calculated to lead his race back to its country.

It is all in vain that the Jews accumulate millions by financial transactions which cause milliards to flow to their banking houses like water under a mill-wheel; they could not, without being false to their faith, realise their hopes by taking steps to re-acquire Palestine. Let Rothschild, Pereira and any others pool their wealth, the total figure of which would surpass that of all the fortunes that the world has ever seen; let them offer the Sultan to pay off all his debts, and the entire liberation of the Ottoman Empire; let the Sultan sell them Palestine, and let all the European powers countersign the agreement—not one Jew would follow them to Jerusalem.

Those who no longer believe in the sacrifice of Abraham, in the promises of God, and in the Messiah of the Prophets, will prefer to marry their son to some Parisian legitimist lady—

their daughter to an English lord or a Prussian ambassador, rather than quit the centre of civilisation and proceed to create a new home in that ravaged and desert country—cursed by nature, whatever it may be by God.

The believers would consider they were committing an act of sacrilege, should they return to the land of Canaan as the result of their own efforts.

Hence it follows that, nowadays, the Israelites, freed from all persecutions of the Middle Ages, find their situation in the midst of Christian society not only tolerable, but the most favourable which could be imagined for their active passions, their sedentary tastes, their rage for rapid accumulation, and their desire to dominate indirectly; and it is therefore their pleasure to refuse to join any attempt to return to Palestine. The plea is that they are waiting for a miracle from the God of armies in their favour; a miracle waited for in vain for the last nineteen centuries.

The question now arises whether that is a reason why the Christians also should await this miracle; which is one they are not forbidden to believe possible, although they are under no obligation to hope for it.

After having so long treated the Jews as a nation guilty of deicide, Christian civilisation came suddenly to the decision to treat them as innocent. The idea was that, confronted with "equality and fraternity," the hatred nourished by the Jews towards Christian society would become disarmed; that they would, in a sense, be no longer Jews; but French, German, Italian, and so forth.

Not a bit!—philanthropic philosophy has the naïveté of a blind man. Only charity is in possession of that prudence which is the "virtue of the saints," as the sage of Israel says in the Book of Proverbs. The Hebrews, who reckon their ancestors not by hundreds but by thousands of years, have not condescended to become French, German or Italian. They have remained sons of Israel; so pertinaciously that the fact has become a problem.

For a long time, and deeply, the Christians, it is true, had suffered the misfortune of carrying within the complexity of their society a nation of neither their climate, their temperament, nor their faith. This nation, moreover, had a totally different historic past; other intellectual forms, a strange social organisation, novel physical needs, besides peculiar aspirations

and moral repulsions. It was also a nation always ready to exploit the bad passions of both individuals and governments —of those who suffer as well as of those by whom suffering is caused.

For these reasons it now began to seem to legislators of bad faith (and who believed little more in the Gospel than they did in the Pentateuch) that time had brought about a new psychological fact with which it was necessary to reckon. That fact was that the Jew, as he had now become the citizen of an European state, should cease to be the usurer; as he was during the Middle Ages; he should no longer be the pest of growing-up sons and the spy of hostile camps. The time had come for him to relinquish being the gorged leech of the peasant, the Sunday drink-seller, always well patronised, and the jealous and crabbed contriver of every industry. He was also no longer to remain the imperious and invincible monopoliser of all commerce, and the invisible lever of war, as well as the arbiter of peace.

But, in point of fact, the Jew already no longer carries on any of these forms of business. If he continues usury it is on a totally different footing; and, as for military espionage, that has become too dangerous. The peasant and his drinking, as well as other industries, have gone beyond his control; whilst, as for commerce, that has become world-wide, and, instead of the Jew doing the swallowing he has himself been swallowed up. The hostile Jew, or the noxious Jew, in all these channels has gone completely out of date.

Are the Christian nations any better off for the new presence within their pale?

No!—although those who are interested may pretend so.

The Jew has continued to monopolise money; having placed himself in the position of being able to strangle a country in its hour of danger, either by tightening his purse-strings or cunningly opening his cash-box like a box of Pandora. Henceforth, he completely disdains the little industries and commerce on a small scale, which he used formerly to cultivate. Now, it is the great banking industry and high finance; in both of which he has become the royal autocrat and absolute master, with dazzling rapidity.

The Jew particularly plumes himself on modern liberties, which are specially useful for attacking Christian truth; and

will, in this way, monopolise all the activity of the press in order better to shake the foundations of society.

As he hates the God of Golgotha he naturally hates everything which goes to constitute the power, nobleness and beauty of the societies which hold him in reverence. Accordingly, he is the born enemy of whatever goes to make up their stability and well-being—their prosperity or glory.

Under the pretence of meeting Christians in all the secret societies, he joins in advance every group whose object it is to work for reversal of the established order; it matters not to him what may be the régime or the pretext, providing the idea is to upset what exists—first the throne and then the altar; or, it may be, first religious law and then political. His pleasure is simply to see whatever is good and beautiful in Christian civilisation engulfed in the whirlpool of instability or in the chasm of revolution.

The Jews would lose nothing by being relieved of a few millions, or by having a few palaces burnt. They would beam with joy at the sight of the flames which might consume Paris, in consuming the Rue Lafitte. The petrol would to their senses possess the aroma of lavender, and the dynamite tickle their ears as if its sounds were those of the sweetest music. Who shall take from them their Thora and their Talmud? Are they not accustomed to be despoiled of everything? But are they not also accustomed to regain everything; including riches and power?

Behind every social shock as at the bottom of every moral epidemic the Jews are naturally to be expected. Here they make themselves simply conspirators against the strong; though all the while acting as the servants of their pleasures, the purveyors of their vices and the furnishers of their ruin.

In one place they are liberal, in another republican; elsewhere, radical, socialist or communist. Not by any means that they risk their persons in such polemics: they simply advance the funds. Their vocation is to supply the sinews of war or to pour oil on the fire in the form of ink.

They either write or they pay for the engines—the modern catapults which destroy the citadels of evangelic faith and morality. They well know that no society can keep up its resistance to the supremely disintegrating effect of immorality administered in strong doses; or to the fatal enervation of a complete intellectual demoralisation.

This much is beyond a doubt; that, after having defended themselves, they attack. This lies both in the nature of things and in the necessities of destiny. If they did no harm to the Christians why should the latter have an interest in seeing them back into their own country? And, since it lies in the nature of things that they should do harm to whatever country shelters them, it lies equally within scope of the necessities of destiny that, in order to get rid of this injury, the Christians should seek to give them a country.

But, since they would not accept any country but their own, there is no choice but to give them Palestine—their Jerusalem —their Temple.

In forbidding the Jews to hasten their deliverance or to work in order to shorten their term of exile, their religion has disarmed them, but, at the same stroke, it has preserved them from wasting their energy and resource in projects altogether out of season. Here also is another reason why the force of circumstances obliges the Christians to take up what the people of God are not allowed to carry out.

Since it is contrary to the nature of things that one people should continue to live on another whilst concealed like a parasitic animalcule in the very folds of its entrails, Christianity must regard this state of things as Destiny calling upon it to tear the foreign race from its bosom.

It is bound therefore by its own force to send the Jews back to their native land. God grant that its hand may not become blood-stained in the act of doing so.

3.—The case as towards the return to Palestine.

In order therefore to escape from a dilemma in which it might very soon become impossible to remain, it now falls to the lot of the Christians to carry out this enterprise which the Jews themselves are forbidden to touch. In other words, it is incumbent upon Christianity to give Palestine back to the rightful owners, and to endow it with the status of a neutral country. This naturally means that its neutrality must be guaranteed by powers whose flags will float over St. Sepulchre; whilst relays of Christian soldiers successively mount guard alike before its entrance and before that of all the other holy

places illumined by tradition. It is not possible for the Christians to evade this duty, because it is one imposed upon them by the merest instinct of their own self-preservation. This is so clearly the case that, in the event of the Israelites refusing to accept the benevolent offer made to them, the moment would surely come when these same States, being reduced to stand upon the defensive, would compel them to abandon everything and go; and would even have to chase them to their frontiers, if necessary.

Thus, once again, the Jews would experience their ancient treatment; when they were compelled to leave their beloved country and were followed up beyond its borders, with no prospect but that of a long and lugubrious exile.

However strongly such an event as is here foreshadowed may seem contrary to modern feeling, the fact remains. It is, for example, directly opposed in spirit to the new line taken up by the United States; which, not content with granting to each newcomer—to each immigrant, no matter from what direction the wind has wafted him—as many acres of arable land as he chooses to take, giving him whatever political rights he chooses to exercise.

There will come a moment, however, when all those Christian nations amongst whom the Jew at present has his dwelling will have to recognise that the question of expelling him or allowing him to remain is one really of life or death. It is a choice between health or perpetual sickness—between social peace or perpetual debility and constant disturbance.

Shall we be told that the Jews will be able to avail themselves of vast regions of uncultivated country in Asia, Africa and Australia? Such an escape from the difficulty could amount to no more than a respite; because, not having the power to penetrate in advance of Christian civilisation, all they can do is to follow it. And, after having got rid of them in its capital cities, it would certainly not tolerate them long in its colonies. It is thus a mere question of time. Sooner or later they will be forced by Christianity sword in hand to reoccupy their own country.

Then, weak-hearted Jews, those already attacked by the anæmia of scepticism, will forswear themselves; kneeling before our altars in order to be allowed to remain. Believers, on the contrary, will rush to the Promised Land; and regard their own return as the long looked-for miracle.

Ah! ye gods!—would it not after all be really a miracle? To see a people remaining so vivacious after twenty centuries of exile, spread over the five continents of the world—to see them still possessing five millions of valid men capable of taking possession of their promised land, would it not be indeed a miracle?

From that land the lover of one of its beautiful daughters had cast them forth ages before—the lover of the famous Berenice, born thirty years after the death of Christ, and the wife of that Herod whose name is overcast with awful remembrances, both of the birth and of the crucifixion of Jesus.

"And what shall we expect afterwards?" inquire the mystics.

Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof. Evidently, the European nations have an urgent common interest in giving back Palestine to those to whom it belongs. Humanly speaking this is as much an act of reason as of equity. Palestine for the Israelites, Italy for the Italians, France for the French, and so forth. Moreover, as Italians have already recovered their country, it is only just that Jews should do the same; indeed, it is doubly so if their presence among the European nations causes numerous evils and grave perils. How can it concern us to inquire what is likely to happen afterwards? Will they rebuild Solomon's Temple, or will they not do so? To that we can only answer—the future is the secret of God.

Not long after the Revelation of the Apocalypse, the belief that the end of the world was at hand became widely spread amongst Christians; and especially amongst the numerous sects of which a large proportion were still closely united to Judaism.

Then, there arose a legend to this effect:

"The Judgment Day will not arrive until all the Jews are converted."

Although this prophecy became somewhat discredited when it was seen that the year 1000 had arrived without the sun falling on the moon or the stars on the earth, or there being the slightest indication of any coming conversion of the Jews as had been predicted, it nevertheless continued to circulate amongst the mystics and to be received almost as dogmatic fact by those who were poorly instructed in theology; of whom there were unfortunately very many. The legend itself appears to have the support of some obscure texts; but it has never been considered as an authentic exegesis.

At the Vatican Council a certain group of converted Jews once presented the bishops with an exegetical study in which they professed to give a still more profound explanation of these same texts, as well as of some others. According to this interpretation the conversion of the people of God, deicide but always dear to the Divine heart, still faithful to the covenant with Abraham, will take place after the return to Palestine; and precede that era of universal peace and terrestrial happiness which many mystics and exegetics have called the

"Reign of the Holy Spirit."

We might imagine the socialists having a similar presentiment; and declaring that

"The golden age"

lies in the forward path of the human race which needs only to continue its onward march in order to attain it.

We can but conclude that, as we have said, though the future may be the secret of God, justice remains a duty of men; and, since the Jews are no more able to regain their far off country simply by their own efforts than were the Italians without assistance to regain their country (even though it was close at hand), it is obvious that the European powers must intervene. They must oblige the Israelites to return to Palestine; because, in the first place it is their country; and, secondly, by thus assisting they will have enabled them to regain it without having infringed the religious tenets which forbid them to do anything active in that direction.

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And the Gipsies? Where is their country? Where shall we look for it? How can we give it them? Why compel them to have one at all? What is there to attract them to it? Are there any remembrances of a glorious past or any reasons of justice and equity? Is there any prestige of the moment or hope of the future to hold out to them as an inducement?

CHAPTER VII.

The Gipsy as Phenomenon

1.—The Gipsy's idea of Liberty.

IN direct opposition to the Jewish nation, with its blind obedience to absolute regulations, the Gipsy race rejects all despotism of law, its entire earthly desire being limited to that of existence; so much so that, whatever intervenes to fix or limit the means even to that one end, encounters from it a disdain—foolish but sublime. It maintains its individuality both by its constant association with Nature and by its profound indifference for all other men; with whom it only comes in contact for the purpose of procuring the means wherewith to live.

If it delights in deceiving others, that happens entirely without hatred or malice aforethought. Any spite or ill-feeling which it may nourish is ephemeral; always accidental and applying to persons only—never as illustrating any principle. If it laughs at the superiority of civilised mankind that happens only in the same sense that a fox would laugh at a farmer whose poultry yard he had despoiled.

Even if the Gipsy race is not always entirely inoffensive, yet from the moment that its wants are satisfied at all events it has never any premeditated desire to injure in the mass. It is concerned only to preserve the liberty of the wild horse; for it has never been able to understand the preference for a house-roof, however finely constructed, to the heavenly arch-roof of the forests.

Authority, law, rule, principle, precept, obligation, duty—

these are all notions and things insupportable to this strange race; not only because to admit them would necessitate an amount of reflection and mental application which would be most repugnant to it, but also because, in the alternative case, it enjoys all the chance consequences of a life without object or result—a life the idle vagabondage of which is subject only to the incitations of imagination and desire.

This search for a degree of liberty so absolute as to become savage engenders naturally an invincible dislike for work, as well as for that commerce of which the industrious Jew is so fond. The dislike thus formed arises from the inevitable restraint applying to all civilised life on account of its subjection to rule; and to all habitation which ventures to forsake the grottos and the mountains.

In order not to allow the slightest encroachment upon this frenzied liberty, or any other kind of change to occur in it, the Gipsies make no difficulty about submitting to any procedure or expedient (even those of a description impossible of acceptance by nations less uncultivated) for the purpose of avoiding any loss of freedom in the supply of their few wants.

How different are they in all this to the Israelites with whom the sense of right and wrong is so superfine, so constantly kept alive by obedience to meticulous precept, and by their faith in the Decalogue; the latter teaching them to abstain from the theft of a single crown, at the very moment when they are extorting ten thousand by usury. The reason for this is that theft is forbidden, but usurious gain from the Gentile praiseworthy.

As they possess neither Bible nor Testament, the Gipsies see no necessity to tax their intelligence with the comprehension of abstract ideas, as they find it already functions very well within the circle of *instinct*. Having a vague consciousness of their own harmlessness they are content to live in the sun, charmed by its sparkling warmth, and enlivened by its cheerful rays, to give themselves up to a small number of primordial and elementary passions, but never to permit any conventional virtue to trouble their free and easy manners. To be completely untroubled is more to them than any advantages which might accompany the repression of even the least of their desires.

They draw the need for the unlimited independence which has become the distinctive trait of their character from a practically unceasing excitement, caused by incessant contact

with Nature. Refusing ever to withdraw from this contact, the consequent mental stimulation becomes with them so habitual that they would be unable to exist if deprived of this unbroken continuation of lively and penetrating sensations. For them there is nothing in the wide world capable of compensating for these pleasures; which are taken in at every pore, and eagerly responded to by every sense. One might consider them as always intoxicated with the milk of Cybele, which they partake of to such mad excess that the vertigo from it disturbs their reason and disarranges all their feeling.

Nothing in Gipsy estimation equals the liberty of satisfying even the least of their desires at any moment. They will throw off every moral shackle, every social dependence, and every interior drawback, rather than cease for a moment to feel able to follow up the electric spark of a desired sensation.

To "feel" is an expression which compactly describes the whole of their being; they must "feel," at any price. They have no more taste for command than for obedience; both being regarded by them as burdens of subjection. The idea of "possession" is as foreign to them as that of "duty"; and, as a matter of fact, the verbs to "have" and to "owe" do not exist in their language.* Hence, cause and effect, prevision and relation of past to future, are ideas not only repugnant but impossible to entertain.

What an antithesis with the Israelites; who make the continuation of their existence depend upon the constant increase of their possessions.

2.—The Gipsy and the Anchorite.

The sole object which the Gipsies pursue is constantly to delight their senses by all the enjoyments which they can derive from their great goddess, Nature—the only one whom they recognise and adore. Clearly, therefore, this is most readily obtained by an absolute liberty of existence and indifference to "possessions." But the majority of passions fami-

* See Pott's philological treatise, crowned by the French Institute, "The Gipsies in Europe and Asia." First published at Halle, 1844.

liar to every kind of civilisation arise from the necessity for and the struggle after "possessions"; and, by the mere fact of a people giving up this ambition, it becomes exempt from all seductions having reference to mode of existence.

In this way the Gipsies succeed in freeing themselves from all those worldly attractions which we comprehend under the title

"pomps of Satan"

as completely as the anchorite himself.

But, the motive of their detachment from all these temptations being so contrary to that of the anchorite, the employment of their liberty is so, also. The latter gives up all earthly ties and all inclinations which chained his heart to this world out of a supreme love for a principle, the exclusive contemplation of which causes him by degrees to lose all taste for the joys which he gives up; but the Gipsy breaks all the ties and rejects all the chains society with other men might create about him, in order to take his fill of pleasure which lies close at hand.

The anchorite renounces the love of family and country, of society and civilisation in order to give himself up to the adoration of the supreme mover of all; but it is simply by egoism that the Gipsy does so.

Still, admirable though he may be in his silent contempt for our ambitions, despotisms, frivolities and illusions; as also for our weaknesses, meannesses and servitudes; he degrades himself by repudiating (together with the crime and vice which society naturally brings about) the virtue and saintliness by which it is at the same time held together and maintained.

3.—The doctrine of poetic egoism.

We have given egoism as the cause of the Gipsy's insatiable thirst for liberty and of his frantic desire to enjoy every moment of his existence. He will not separate himself from Nature. She is his mother, though often a hard-hearted one; she is his divine goddess, and she is his queen; though often a cruel one. But, whatever betide, she is for him an inexhaustible fund of delight.

No one can ignore the fact that egoism leads to barbarism,

either in the sense of cruelty or of want of cultivation; just as religion is conducive to a charity which is infinite, whilst society leads to one which is conditional.

But, when civilisation has filed off the asperities of primitive egoism (which is so inborn with man and inherent to his nature that he cannot throw it off completely, whether he gives up the prospect of earthly or heavenly happiness), the only effect of this is, very often, to efface the individual expression of egoism of the Gipsy kind; which, after all, is childlike and practical, in favour of the germs of another kind, which is both hypocritical and prosaic.

We should be inclined to name this latter kind

Egotism,

as it is essentially different from

Egoism;

for, though equally absolute, it is considerably meaner and more unworthy.

Egoism proceeds from that aspiration towards the infinite felicity of feeling which nothing will ever eradicate from the heart of man. This aspiration is so proper to great and noble souls, that, in order to nourish it (which they are constrained to do as there are no means of stifling it altogether) they have discovered the secret of creating for themselves a happiness out of abnegation. This applies only when happiness does not happen to be already secured by the possession of a real or ideal love—by having a divine cause, one's native country, a beloved being, art or nature, for its object.

These souls do not seek one another, God knows. But they come together in the joy of giving and of devoting themselves. That is their egoism. They are not precisely loving themselves when they love God, their country, their cause or their art; but, in loving those objects, they are completely satisfying their inward need of loving. They could never do otherwise; as they know quite well.

Egotism, on the contrary, is nothing but the selfish preference acorded to one's own person, to the wants of one's own body or soul, over those of any other person or thing in the world. It is the worship of one's being as merely physical, mortal, limited; of one's material welfare, of one's sensual or vain enjoyments, or of one's paltry and greedy desires.

The first kind (egoism) feeds upon emotions, even at the cost of traversing sensation.

The second kind (egotism) kills emotion, in order to sweeten sensation; applying to the latter every means, with more or less ostensible cynicism.

From egoism proceeds pride; from pride, tyranny and blasphemy; but from egotism we get self-sufficiency; from self-sufficiency, nullity; and from nullity, the decline of the human race.

The man who is self-sufficient has already placed himself in the position of nullity, as far as his fellow creatures are concerned; he has deposed himself, as a consequence of assuming the dignity of a co-operator with God. His unavoidable connection with the wheel-work of the great world-machine goes on; but it goes on without him, as he knows nothing about it.

Egoism, as the sentiment of self, is not so sterile; and even abounds in fruitful principles. Whatever may be the sphere in which it displays its action, it is the source, more or less direct and more or less perceived and avowed, which inspires man with the courage of his convictions; even that of heroism. The activity of genius and even that of goodness would not exist but for the esteem (either tacit or expressed) which one has of one's self. Is it not that esteem which engenders and promotes the desire of developing our faculties, to whatever order they may belong, to their utmost limit, and sometimes beyond—of using them, in short, as means of action and enjoyment?

This egoism can be recognised in pride, extended to arrogance, and in the energy of evil-doing, as much as in the perseverance with which even good actions are pursued. It is as apparent in unreflecting insubordination as in holy anger; and in the protection given to the weak as in revolt against the strong—in each case, sometimes right and sometimes wrong. Too often, it winds up in the consuming atmosphere of society; which, alas! is for the most part given up to the gross satisfactions of materialism; purchased, no matter at what price, even at that of honour.

To resist this influence would amount very soon to being anathematised, proscribed, vilified and kept under by the conventions which the world has instituted to serve as bit and bridle. It would be to live in continual fear of the imminent danger which always accompanies a living force.

From this proud primordial egoism all the personal value of man is derived, according to the twofold acceptation of the term; for he was created for happiness, and suffering is not his final end. When, therefore, he desires to be happy, he is simply acting in accordance with his nature; for he is destined to be happy for eternity, however little he may either believe or hope in it.

Catholic theology is far too versed in the science of the human soul not to have taken good account of this feeling, from which the richest and most beautiful natures are not exempt. She accordingly promises as a reward to those who deny themselves that they shall possess God in eternity. An affirmation of which the sublime hardihood surpasses everything that imagination had ever conceived of glory in immortality.

Carried to excess, a proud stately egoism, a highly developed estimate of one's "noble self," may lead, it is true, to some explosions and even frightful digressions; but, on the other hand, a total absence of it leaves a man without power, will or nerve. Moved by this powerful sentiment of self, the slave Epictetus felt himself freer than his master; whom he considered a slave of social prejudices. Without it, society becomes so despicable, at last, that Caligula could go so far as to wish that all his subjects had collectively but one head, so that it might be taken off at a stroke. Supreme expression of a judgment which is as much the eternal condemnation of the people who inspired it, as of the autocrat who pronounced it.

The egoism thus shown to be capable of being poetically celebrated constitutes the vital principle, both of the Jew and Gipsy. But it manifests itself in the two cases under forms so different that only the analytic process is able to demonstrate the identity of the two impulses; as the effects produced by them present not the slightest resemblance.

The two peoples, for instance, are each actuated by a similar pride; but to the one it inspires a complete disregard of, and to the other an exclusive devotion to, Nature. To the one it ordains a systematic ill-will towards the remainder of mankind, and to the other an insurmountable desire only to live apart; though, notwithstanding this immense difference, there is the same silence respecting mysteries of nationality in each case.

Only (and let this be well noted, because it is the very kernel of the whole subject as here discussed) the pride in question inspires one nation to exploit the art of the Gentiles, taking care not to outpour their own soul; but the other it inspires to create its own art, for the purpose of soul-expansion without taking any heed of the art of the "Giorgio"* whatever.

Quite contrary to the Israelites, the Gipsies did not, at all events, originally sing either for the Christians or in the Christian manner. They did not cultivate art either upon any model, or for any public whatever. They sang simply because they instinctively felt the need of song; the need of singing for themselves and for one another.

4.—Poetic egoism as applied to Gipsy music.

If Nature, in charming our senses, did not awaken impressions of an order superior to mere sensual excitement, we might perhaps believe the Gipsy to be a victim of prosaic egotism; in sacrificing all other human inclinations to the joy of associating his entire life with Nature.

But prosaic egotism, in renouncing emotion for fear of the faculty of suffering which it develops simultaneously with that of happiness, becomes incapable either of producing art or of entering adequately into the inner sense of it. At the very most it might, by a refinement of corruption, be able to find some sensual pleasure in the beauty of its material manifestation. It can never create; because, in order to create, there must be a breath of sentiment to which prosaic egotism is entirely opposed; and, besides that, there must be an idea, or a form in which the sentiment to be expressed takes shape; and the trouble and labour involved in the acquirement of these needs are conditions which prosaic egotism will certainly never undertake.

But the severest condition is to come; and it is one which, to prosaic egotism, is frankly impossible.

There must be a love extending *beyond self;* that of the

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* "Giorgio" in the gipsy language signifies stranger, foreigner, and is therefore the synonym of the term Gentile, as used by the Jews.

idea, the form, the object; in short, the creation. There is, therefore, no alternative but to admit that the poetic egoism of the Gipsies is purer and nobler than the prosaic egotism of the Epicureans of all decadent society; since they have proved themselves superior to the conditions quoted, by having not only created an art, but one eminently national.

If this poetic egoism, that is to say, egoism without cloak or disguise, without attenuation or compromise—egoism, frank and absolute, is the unique motive-power of the Gipsy's life, at all events we must allow that he has carried it back to its purest source in making it unfold to art its inspirations. The pride of egoism breathes in those inspirations; but they express the consciousness possessed by man in his own intrinsic value, in his right to his own individuality, and to be by himself and for himself; his estimation of the value of his will, as the emanation of his own soul, his effective superiority over all creation.

The accents of that inspiration throw defiance to all despotism; supreme denial on the part of human nature of the sophisms of a half-civilisation. Supreme denial of those conventions which pretend to consider the subjection and exploitation of one man by another as innocent; and, of course, also the servility and degradation, the venality and dastardliness; ignoble offspring by which such exploitation is always followed.

In Gipsy art we again meet with the pride of poetic egoism, carried to that abstract and aphoristic pitch at which it maintains itself unchangeable amongst the generality of the human race; but which is seldom found as the predominant trait of any people or individual. We meet it there, moreover, without that fatal mistletoe-growth due to the exuberance of its sap, and therefore in all the splendour of its force.

It makes man feel that he is, first of all, master of himself; by right of birth. That he is also possessor of Nature, her chief, her king; but her lover more than all. And that he is her enthusiastic and whole-hearted lover, who knows that only by loving her can she be ever thoroughly understood. Gipsy music is, as it were, penetrated through and through by that constant and superb affirmation which constitutes its sympathetic element; and to which may be traced the origin of more than one of our own most beautiful impulses.

When a sentiment springs from such profound roots in the

best regions of the human heart and is capable of attaining such sublime altitudes then (whatever may be the errors or even the deplorable degradations to which it may cause an individual or a people to descend) from the moment that it manifests itself in art and is embodied in the form of the beautiful, it becomes detached from the distressing remembrances of its perversion. It breaks then its repulsive mask; in order to appear, for however short a time, in its original harmony and native splendour. Why therefore should we misrepresent the primordial energies of man as unsettled and applied to false purposes, when we see that they are no sooner applied to art than they become released from their monstrous excesses and reappear in their entire beauty?

However improbable it may appear at first sight to have discovered a germ of nobleness in the demonstrations of beings so universally and traditionally decried as the Gipsies (whose existence approximates to that of the brute-creation) the revelations of art bring irrefutable evidence of the success of the attempt.

5.—The Gipsy's fascination.

It is impossible not to regard such a powerful longing for the uninterrupted presence of Nature as to lead to a complete indifference to all the charms of civilised life otherwise than as a curious psychological phenomenon.

What a singular problem is that of a whole race, deliberately throwing off all discipline in order to lead a life of hazard; and, for the sake of doing so, patiently accepting the roughness of the elements, and the uncertainties of every coming day. A race which defies every human burden, holds every deprivation and humiliation in contempt, submitting to be hounded from country to country, across oceans and through chains of glaciers, rather than consent to bear the luxurious yoke of any legislation whatever!

What a force of inertia; what an absence of all that we recognise as social instinct must we here suppose. A people whose common life during succesive ages remains that of the plant without roots which grows on the steppes, the stalks of

which are blown in every direction by the cold north wind of autumn. But even they take with them flowers and seeds which are germinated without soil on divergent winding branches; justifiably giving rise to the popular metaphor which names this plant

"the fiancée of the wind."

Like it the Gipsies allow themselves to be wafted hither and thither, at one time visiting the North and at another the South. Arrived from the East, they proceed to the West; but remain, at all times and in all places, inaccessible to the attractions of any fixed and regulated existence.

On rare occasions amongst them there may have been instances of an attempt to become accustomed to house-life. But these have always been unsuccessful. Sooner or later they have concluded with a return to the necessitous camp and patched garments—to the rough companionship of their fellows, and the dusky beauty of their women—to the untrodden shades of the forest and to the murmurs of freshly-encountered brooks.

These sons of the open have been unable to resist the call of the frenzied dance in the forest glade; of the sly, contemptuous trickery of their thefts, and of the ironic sport of their deceits. The excitements had become completely irresistible of an existence in which the frequent attacks of vertigo (due in some part to alcohol) come in to add to the fantastic attraction of all the foregoing conditions.

The charm exercised by this attraction is one which does not admit of dissection or of cold explanation; for it reveals itself only to the initiated. In short, the secrets of certain enthusiasms can only be appreciated by those who have actually experienced their thrill.

6.—Gipsy-land and Patriotism.

The passion for Nature, when once it had attained the force of an actual need, became tyrannical like every other. Its domination may be observed as clearly in the case of a people as of an individual living under its influence.

The Laplander or the native of Samoa, equally with the hunter of the Alps or Pyrenees—the Cossack of the steppes,

equally with the sailor of Brittany, languish and decay if an attempt is made to transplant them to scenes other than those amongst which they have been brought up.

But the whole of these restrict their love of Nature to that of one particular kind—that for a certain region and its peculiar traits. Either the magnificence of boreal splendours or the proud majesty of mountains. For some, it will be the unbroken stillness of the unlimited plain; for others, the redoubtable aspect of an ocean in fury. But, in every case, one particular phase of Nature has become so dear that even sight seems useless when deprived of its contemplation; and the soul declines in sensibility in the same degree as it is removed from such impression.

Then, again, the inhabitants of all these countries lead a life appropriate to their climate; and pursue a régime regulated entirely without reference to any other. In them, the love of Nature, moreover, always serves to consolidate that for their native country; its religion, property or social institutions. When such folks suffer from home-sickness it is not so much the landscapes of their country that they regret as it is its manners, customs and habits; their own family and domicile, their childhood's recollections, their conquests of middle-age and the tombs they venerate. It is therefore not the landscapes, but rather what those landscapes contain; for in them are enframed alike the past and future.

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But, with the Gipsies, all this is not so. All notions of country, property and social institutions are specially repudiated by them. They form no local habit, deny the attraction of child reminiscence, desire no conquest, and, having no past, frankly challenge all future.

The entire earth is their country, the ground is their own, whilst every climate pleases them in which they can wander freely and move without restraint.

The tribe, formed and collected by chance though it may be, is their family; a tent, though a mere covering extended from tree to tree, their sufficient habitation; and any object of present momentary enjoyment their undisputed property.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Gipsy as Special Votary of Nature.

1.—With the Gipsy in the Open.

IT would be necessary to have often slept under the canopy of far-off skies and been awakened by the rays of the rising sun which, brightening the morning dew, fall upon the sleeper's eyelids like little fiery tongues—one must also know what it is fearlessly to allow the serpent to coil itself cold and sticky over the naked legs; and, half-awake, to feel its creeping motion over the forehead; or to have idled the long day through, lying at length amongst the high growth of fields where the scythe has never been, in order to be prepared to enter into the spirit of our present subject.

To have, time and again, studied the irregular melodies of the hurricane, richly orchestrated as they are by the fir-trees with their thousand needle-points and by the reeds with their myriads of pipes; to have learned to understand the confidential and endearing whisperings that the euphonies of the twilight whisper so low, so low, into the ear of a passionate lover of the landscape—these are but other essentials to the same end.

But it would also be necessary to have learned to recognise each tree by the aroma of its sap, to know something about the mysterious language of the birds, and to understand alike the gay finch and the chattering grasshopper. To have often gone astraddle at night-fall over the open country when the setting sun gives the atmosphere such a glow as to make it seem like going through a damp fire, because it warms the eyes

whilst it cools the body, and to have done this until a pale obscurity follows in which the stars of heaven appear to frolic and blink their eyes, becoming every moment more in number, more smiling and loving, more coquettish and teasing, than before.

This, too.—But, on the other hand, one must have also seen, on black nights, the moon, red as a disc of polished copper, rise over a plain where everything seemed dead; from which every animal had fled and where nothing but a thick brushwood was left to form upon the horizon its uncanny outlook, like the back of an enormous rhinoceros or the silhouette of some giant elephant asleep.

When one has done each and all of these things, in other words, when one has led the Gipsy life, and then only, does it become clear how impossible it is for the Gipsy to exist deprived of the various exhilarations with which such life is replete. He cannot sleep in a stone cage and with a low ceiling over his head. Accustomed to the free breath of the infinite, he would have to suffocate under such conditions. His eye, accustomed to the diaphanous ether of the open, would weep on encountering nothing but narrow walls; and his ear decay, if seeking in vain the wide modulations of the evening storm.

What is there which could replace the impression, to which the Gipsy is accustomed, of those moving scenes of tragedies, carried out in places from which man is usually absent?

What would there be to recall to him the sanguinary dramas which unfold themselves round about the setting sun as at a hero's death?

What is there to compare to the loving caresses of the dewy mist, or to the far-off tints which envelop in uncertainty outlines but gradually revealed by the rising sun on a bright spring morning

What kind of well-being lies within the power of industry to supply, capable of being compared with that happy contentment, seeming to double the vital forces, which arises after a warm summer rain in the open country; at sight of the earth, all foliage bathed; and the sky, reconciled and radiant again?

Is there anything to vie with the crushing fury which roars in the thunder of a July storm, when the forest voices repeat it in a fearsome chorus?

Does a rival exist of the elegiac sadness of the scene presented by the wood, when the autumn wind strips it of its

foliage, and, as if in anger, casts the recently enchanting leafy decorations, now faded, hither and thither?

And where is the power whose pomp can approach that of the cold rigours of the frost; the appearance of which seems like that of some inhuman master, as the chatter of the busy cheerful waters is at once stilled, all song is at an end, the very blood-flow of the plants is now suspended, the very earth now hardened?

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The pleasures invented by man can never prove other than sickly and insipid to the man accustomed to drink from the cup which Nature offers him, intending him to enjoy every drink and to relish every drop. Of what value are town-baubles to the man who enjoys braving the winter, and feeling the fire of his cheeks resisting its cold breath—who prefers being alone and unsheltered from its biting rod, in the midst of a desert of ironic splendour?

One becomes insensible to the refinements of an idle Sybaritism when one has experienced the soothing thrill and pleasant torpor of the cold; which gives less presentiment of it the nearer death approaches. How insignificant, too, must appear our illuminations by gas, and even our dazzling sumptuousness of electrical displays; to one who has witnessed a caprice of the whirlwind, when the entire bright covering of the hill-tops, the whole mass of diamond-like snow, is at once carried away and played with as the wind toys with the folds of a silken flag?

And our theatres, with their display of light! How *he* must disdain them, whose theatre is the grand work of God; and who, should he wish for any light other than that which he receives from above, prefers the joyous fantastic glare of his heap of twigs and dry leaves?

And where are the spectacles and decorations to be found fit to offer to the man used to the terrifying sight of the waterfall?—to that of the ripped-up flanks of precipices and rocks, and to the anger of the rivers when they overflow?

For hearts so greedy of the ineffable joys of creation there could not well exist any factitious passions, puerile vanities or empty ambitions. Such natures, indeed, would not even understand the paltry workings of such concerns. How could we teach the futilities of our conventional arrangements to men

who do not flinch at an existence which compels them to face danger at any moment, with whom danger is their only habit?

Men accustomed to face the hungry wolf, the impetuous bounds of a steaming overflowing torrent—men who know what it is to be overtaken by the tearing swiftness of the furious south winds, when seeming mad with despair; men who know therefore what man can do, and also what he cannot do, in the presence of Nature! These are the men who, in the intervals between such moving episodes, let the days go by in dreamy isolation, without speaking to either man or woman; and preferring to watch the undulations caused by pebbles thrown into the lake, to exchanging vain words having neither object nor result.

Great God!—such men are indeed unfit to have anything to do with the paltry meannesses of prosaic egotism—the system which chokes every worthy passion in order that some unworthy desire may profit by it; that dries up every elevated aspiration for the benefit of some degraded lust; that only cures folly in order that it may be replaced by wickedness; that preaches the perils of liberty in order to make it easy to introduce the livery of servitude; seeking to create a disgust for nature, in order the more easily to fill its gilded prisons.

After having had both eye and ear constantly delighted with an endless variety of pleasure, showered upon him without prevision or exercise of his will, and therefore without labour —pleasure, the delicious caresses of which he can enjoy without having to stay their course by any remembrances—the Gipsy is not likely to find in the productions of civilised life any objects capable of rivalling the charm of this multiplicity of moving, and, as it were, prismatic sensations.

2.—The Rival Lovers.

Nature remains an entire dead letter for the citizen or worker who looks upon her as so much raw material for various manufacturers to exploit in their respective workshops. She scarcely murmurs more than a few incoherent words (either terrible in her anger or smiling in her goodness) to the scientific man; who, armed with fire and iron, is endeavouring to discover her secrets.

She causes a gentle emotion (one leaving a secret to guess at behind it) to the good souls who gaze at her, in passing, from their seat in a railway carriage; as one would gaze at a theatre-decoration from one's seat in a box.

In the next place, and whether agreeable or not, her reflections and the associations appertaining to the images which she raises in the mind are useful to augment the intensity of any joy or grief; and to serve as background to the events being experienced and therefore nearest in point of time.

Finally, she sings to the very heart of the poet; revealing specially to him, in interviews of ineffable sweetness, some of her choicest secrets.

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But for those beings who give themselves up entirely to her incessant influence, living entirely by her and for her, she is a magician. She takes possession of them. Like a haughty woman, or a beneficent fairy, or a sovereign queen, in full pride of power, she changes aspect to those who do not question—but adore her.

The dominating charm which Nature exercises is sometimes exemplified in a partial sense; as, for example, among brigands, smugglers, poachers and pirates. The feeling in their case is, however, quite secondary; since their contact with Nature only arises, either in pursuance of a sordid interest, or as the result of banishment which has overtaken them as criminals; in the absence of which compulsions they would not be leading an adventurous life at all.

Instances of something analogous are also to be met with among savage peoples, but have nothing to do with the furious love of Nature on the part of the Gipsy; which stands alone as that of a race living for ages at the heart of all civilisations, and yet resisting every attraction and every benefit, for the sake of remaining face to face with the imperious object of its love.

Can it be that the Gipsy race is more susceptible than others to the sensations, as exquisite as they are intense, produced by Nature's marvels? One is almost tempted to think so, seeing it stand so completely alone in rejecting with utter pertinacity everything which might in the least degree tend to imperil the satisfaction of that one excessive passion.

The Gipsy as Special Votary of Nature

3.—The dangers of infatuation.

The grand harmony of Creation unfolds itself in such colossal and varied proportions that the faculties of man become exhausted before embracing them in their ensemble; the effect being stupendous upon one who resolves never to quit its presence, who desires to undergo the immediate influence of its manifestations, and to identify himself with all the exultations of the eternal and glorious ode which it sings to its Creator, and of which it is only given to us to lisp a few syllables. He who does so will also desire to witness the constant upheavals offered to our gaze, and not only hear the cries called forth by catastrophe, but also listen to its songs of love.

A true lover of Nature, such as we have in mind, will not reflect upon her away from her presence; nor engage in any meditation upon the sense and cause of her phenomena, preferring never to quit the boundless and moving scene before him, or lose the continuity of his impressions.

But—whoever thus, without reserve, becomes absorbed in the poetry of the material world, and is therefore completely given up to the inhalation of Nature's inspiring breath—whoever does this is exposed to a great peril.

Having wandered down perspectives which extend far out of sight, should he try to fathom their manifold intricacies he will find his reason disturbed as if by the effect of some divine nectar which his lips have had the profane audacity to approach.

Not being able to concentrate, in his disturbed mind, the conception of Nature's innumerable evolutions, the design of its general plan will appear to him confused, oscillating and full of breaks. Its periodical returns, its numerous analogies, its adorable stability, its tireless monotony, its symbolical combinations and the uniformity of its laws, so well disguised—all will become unintelligible to him by the multiplicity of their details, the abundance of their varieties, and the richness of their forms.

Each leaf being different from others, each hour being unlike the last, no day resembling its yesterday, the birds pouring out their song in a multitude of concerts which are never the same, the light giving out at each minute a different tint, the landscape having in the morning a new aspect—in the evening a

new expression, the tree shaking its plumage with intonations gentle or solemn according to the humour of the moment, each herb with its leaf differently marked, each crevice of the rocks with its moss differently coloured, the earth itself taking a different tint with each day's journey—at all this chaos of beauties so dissimilar, man is completely lost in astonishment; his imagination being like those columns of water which are thrown up with great force, but which, without meeting any obstacles or limits, mount to a height where they lose their consistency and spread out with a fine dust of transparent particles.

His thoughts are dispersed and scattered and his power to arrange in his mind, and in an orderly manner the result of what he may perceive, is gone. He is continually engaged in such broad contemplations, extending as from that of lovely grace to that of the overwhelming crash of some natural disturbance, that his thinking power is weakened; for it is one unceasing play upon the whole keyboard of emotions, from that of the sweetest abandonment to that of the utmost precautionary defiance; from the chirruping of little birds to the life and death fight with eagle or jackal; or from the serenity of the good days to the anxieties of the time of danger.

By this influence man becomes wild with the deer, and amorous with the dove; he idly reclines among the flowers and their fragrance, but he bounds as eagerly as the panther; his pride has no limit when he is revelling in the sun, but his anger is inflexible when he has just escaped the rough tremor of peril; his courage rises when he affronts the dangers of peak and glacier, but it goes to rest during the soft play-time in the vineyards.

Thus it is that he passes continually from enervation to vehemence; from expansion to fear.

4.—Man and the Landscape.

This rapid succession of contradictory movements keeps the mind in a state of disturbance and causes an obscurity to spread which, by degrees, affects the reasoning power. It would appear that, in this perpetual hurly-burly of discordant emotions, ideas become congested; the focus of thought

becomes uncertain; the design of the universe being retained but imperfectly. The comparative faculty becomes numb and the judgment, that luminous vein which should pervade the entire brain, disappears. The reflective qualities are deadened; but magnetic sympathy, instinct, and general alertness are increased. The understanding becomes obtuse, in the same degree that the senses become sharpened; as in the case of the lower animals.

Having thus deserted the position which is his by nature, man still further follows the habits of the lower animals; by clutching as they do at every prey which offers itself. He ruminates when inactive, revels languidly and passively at times of bodily satisfaction, howls at every pang of suffering, and, in order to escape it, will fight with all the insanity of that violence which we recognise as appertaining to a state of fever.

The mental process is similar to that of a lover who allows his irascible passion to become a real disorder, by being so absorbed in the deification of the object of his love that he loses all control. He thus allows his virile superiority to become a dead letter and transform itself into the mere plaything of his own versatilities. He thinks himself unbeloved at any slight severity; and feels himself more and more a slave, after either storm or calm. He knows that he is becoming gradually more fascinated by the august and varied charms of his goddess, and is no longer able to measure the ideal of his love or understand the extent of it. He has only a vague consciousness of its sublimity, for it is also betimes a voluptuous and brutal attachment somewhat resembling monomania in its exterior effects.

In his insensate possession of nature, in his continual assimilation of the incoherent affections which it awakens, the Gipsy abdicates his human supremacy and that royalty of intelligence which is its supreme attribute. An inversion takes place in his mind; by which, instead of concentrating within himself emotions gathered from nature, as the crystal focus gathers rays of light, and lighting thus the celestial flame of poetry which should be his, he allows himself to be completely absorbed by Nature; whereby his reason as surely evaporates as does the sparkling water of a bubbling brook exposed to the scorching sun-heat of the dog-days.

He disregards the poetic meditations and exaltations, by

which the significant features of nature (like those of art) hold out to us the hand of invitation. That invitation is to emotions, the proper employment of which serves as a preparation for sentiments of more positive application; having a liberty and grandeur that enable man to realise that he was created in the image of God. The Gipsy by supposing his momentary impressions to be final in themselves; by failing to realise that, in the order of things, his impressions are intended only to serve the purpose of enabling him to secure a road through the defects of his own nature for the resolutions upon which good actions are based; by fixing his attention exclusively upon the seductive and perilous whirlpool of Nature; has exposed himself to be soon irretrievably maimed by her.

Stupefied, wonder-struck and dumbfounded by the thousand noises, tints and odours which surround him, as by the thousand curves within whose interlacements he is continually tossed, he is no longer able to co-ordinate what he sees. He forgets that, amidst this mass of apparent discords as well as of real differences, Nature preserves a solemn unity and intimate coherence—a strict coherence between the various parts of this vast All. He is no longer able to perceive that the crowd of forms (which to him appear to vacillate in infinite diversity) merge and interlace with order, by means of a rule and disposition both colossal and supremely harmonious.

5.—Lessons from Nature.

It may be that the light of one day neither resembles that of the preceding nor predicts that of the following, but the daylight faithfully reappears, and the seasons return with equal certainty. The stars which shine with such various degrees of brilliancy strictly return to the places designed for them in space. The varicoloured water-fall has never yet appeared twice alike, but the stone over which it passes wears away. The blossom of each plant differs from stem to stem in grace, luxury and fullness, but each seed produces exactly that to which it was destined.

So also it is with vegetation and the earth which bears it; so with the return of the lion to his den and the warbler to its nest; so with the river ever running in its bed, or with the bird of passage returning to a warmer clime.

The Gipsy as Special Votary of Nature

Nature never fails in this continuity of return, this permanence of reproduction, which thus presents the charm of habit. But the vastness of her movements exceeds the physical perception of man; who is soon overcome by terms so far removed in the infinities of time and space, should he undertake to devote himself exclusively to such a study.

In the act of trying to identify himself with Nature's changes individually he loses, if not memory, at least remembrance. He becomes stupidly oblivious of the reflections which might have helped to enlighten his mind. He no longer knows how to combine his emotions one with another by the constancy of his will; he has no longer the power to resume their consideration as from the same time and point. His soul breathes itself out like the vapour of a liqueur which has been heated, or like a fluid from the hands, however tightly they may be clasped.

The coming moment, should it recall to him the last, instead of bringing with it the celebration of a former experience of the same joy, tenderness, solicitude or meditation, is no more than the importunate return of some impression already used up and withered. He no longer sees that these impressions, though of mutual resemblance, differ from one another like different intonations of the same voice.

Man is prevented from arriving at any full conception of uninterrupted happiness by his senses, his moral organisation and the whole of the surroundings among which his lot is cast.

It is for this reason that all religious beliefs have placed their hope of lasting bliss in a future life; for it was impossible to reconcile the mental picture of it with the conditions ruling present human life. The only anticipation of it which here on earth it is given to man to know is habit; which, when sufficiently dear and cherished, yields him, for as long a time as his organs allow, emotions the permanent fullness of which would amount to felicity. Habit may therefore enable him to taste of happiness; which it even stimulates to such a degree that neither pleasure nor passion can rival the hold it takes upon the human soul as the sole conqueror of satiety.

In the absence of an exceptional issue from this difficulty man loses the power to cause his sentiments to converge upon one focus, and at the same time his chance of enjoying that succulent foretaste of lasting happiness which alone is given by habit.

In separating completely from habit he becomes at once subject to a vague instability, which we can only liken to those tremulous agitations of the needle of the mariner's compass, which, in certain conditions, points in the course of a minute to every one of the thirty-two winds of the dial, and is then described as "mad" by the sailors.

The tie of habit is full of charm by its suppleness and elasticity; and no man can liberate himself from it or withdraw from the principle of gravitation, which tends to hold him within a determined orbit, without falling into a morbid state. In inoculating himself with the need of continual change and tending perpetually towards the most divergent points of attraction, it is not alone the mere taste for habit which he loses; he acquires for everything remindful of it a repugnance which, by degrees, approaches horror. By dint of aspiring always to live in a state of febrile excitement his soul reaches a kind of intellectual somnambulism; in which it remains inaccessible to every social influence, and capable only of following instinctive impulse.

6.—The Gipsy's Case.

When the imagination has once arrived at the point just described, and the intelligence is disengaged from all sense of symmetry, the senses fail to appreciate the more intimate relations and closer harmony of social life; on account of being constantly troubled by violent contrasts. Ignorant of the way in which impressions combine in order to double their intensity, those who have, on the contrary, always wildly dispersed them cannot suddenly apply themselves to follow the hidden thought of works of art; which design to speak only *to* the spirit *by* the spirit. Such works require that the sense of sight or hearing seeking to understand them must come prepared; whether it be to detect sculptural beauty, to understand all that the various tints in painting are intended to convey, to feel the signification of metre, to enjoy rhyme or take pleasure in assonance. All these delicate sensations only reveal their corresponding emotions to those who understand their language, by having studied its syntax and its forms.

The intellectual enjoyments obtainable through the plastic

and literary arts were accordingly destined to remain unknown to the Gipsy, as the material enjoyments of luxury and elegance are irksome and unwelcome to him.

Music was the only art accessible to him; because music alone awakens emotion by sensation, without requiring the intervention of any idea.

Music, again, was the only art the exercise of which coincided with his way of feeling; being able to express a sentiment without first requiring it to be clothed in any form of thought—a condition which the Gipsy would have been incapable to carry out. It is therefore only by music; which, if need be, can be practised without instruction, that the Gipsy has been able to proclaim his psychical fraternity with the rest of mankind.

Being unable by nature to confine himself to mere receptivity, man is possessed by an involuntary desire to communicate, in his turn, the impressions by which he has been suddenly and unexpectedly charmed. He is inwardly moved to incorporate, in some act of his own, the moral emanations which have penetrated to him by outside means, and the emotions which he has sought and found; either in the spectacles of nature or in the contemplation of art. Both the one and the other cause his heart to palpitate, without any immediate agency; bring him to tears, without any misfortune having overtaken him; and provoke him to smile, without any subject for mirth being at hand. It is a generous tendency which inclines him to reproduce the impressions drawn from these two divine sources, though vague and without direct application. His desire is to bring them into active life, to seek their return in scenes—not fictional but real—where destinies are decided; to experience them afresh in the episodes which incite and develop his individual passions and personal sentiments, on the very battle-ground of real existence.

To incite man to retrace the fine and noble sentiments which the manifestations of nature and art cause to unclose in him (specially in regard to desires or events which affect his fate or the misfortune and happiness of his fellow-creatures) is precisely what constitutes the sublime aspect and moral sense of the benign influence which the work of God in Nature and the works of man in Art exercise upon the hearts of men, and upon the communities in which they gather.

The Gipsies and their Music

A great artist one day expressed a thought in speaking of Art which is equally applicable to Nature. He said—

"What can Art do, more than stimulate?"

By "stimulate" he naturally meant stimulate to the *good* by the *beautiful*; according to the ancient prayer of the Dorians.

For what is the "good," when elevated to its utmost power, but the "beautiful"; transported from the form in which it is known only to sentiment to the domain of action? And whence could come (if not from there) the ennobling gift of Art and Nature, the elevated character of the tastes which they inspire, and the love of which they are the objects?

Unfortunately, man is so weak, so fragile, so limited in faculty, that he cannot become absorbed in any object whatever.

Light is, for example, the very first condition of his happiness; but too much light will blind him.

Heat is the first principle of his life; but excess will soon devour him. Yet, should light fail, he is the most miserable of beings, and without heat he dies.

In the same way, he dare not totally engulf himself either in Nature or in Art; the view of the intelligence like that of the body risking to become weak by being fixed always in the same direction. Yet, he cannot in any condition disregard Nature without suffering; whilst to disregard Art, in any civilised form of society, means the death of that society, as such.

But, whatever may be the partial disorders which result for the mind from a pre-occupation too exclusive for one of these two objects—Nature or Art—the delicate chords of the hearts so devoted can never all break or become dumb; because Nature inspires and Art expresses sentiments which always *transport* the soul above the lowest regions to which it might descend—sentiments which take it *out of itself* and elevate it, on the contrary, to the highest regions to which it is capable of attaining.

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The case of the Gipsy who draws inspiration from the violent excitements of Nature is that he has instinctively discovered the secret of how to render in art the mode and intensity of his deepest feelings. But there he stops; and, in doing so, condemns himself to eternal inferiority.

The Gipsy as Special Votary of Nature

Destiny has created him man, but he does not know how to act as man. He cannot form and model himself according to his own will, in transporting to the domain of action the inspirations which he has either drawn from Nature or expressed in Art. They have moved and distracted, but have not *stimulated* him.

How many like him—alas!—there are among ourselves.

CHAPTER IX.

The Gipsy's Joys and Sorrows.

1.—His daily life.

IT is impossible to imagine an assimilation with Nature more complete than that of the Gipsy, for he has surrendered his reason wholly captive to its constant variety of aspects and sensations. His heart learns from it an ennui and disgust for all calm and peaceful emotions—those which (whether they relate to light, sound or colour) only, so to speak, half engage the senses concerned. At the same time he gives himself up to be initiated by it; frantically desiring feelings of every excessive kind, and encouraging an exclusive predilection for those which bring into play every sentient faculty; leaving, moreover, none in repose, and therefore maintaining the spirit at one uniform fever level. Thus the extreme becomes his normal element, and he finds no pleasure in interior movements which fall short of their maximum intensity.

His desire is for the enjoyment of his passions; entirely complete, always and every time. To calm, to moderate, to mitigate, or to make them wait; to soften, bend, combat or conquer them, are to him unknown efforts; for his travelling existence gives him an excitability which, by making change his constant pleasure, leaves him little time for the brooding of any desire. He is always aspiring; but his aspirations are as indefinite as hopes must necessarily be which have no object but sensation.

As for his precise desires, he satisfies them brutally; allowing no fear or other consideration to withhold him. Should

their immediate satisfaction be quite impossible, he simply dismisses them from mind; and this forgetfulness, like a profound sleep of memory, engulfs them like the sleep of death.

Insensible to the many complex passions which agitate the man born and bred in a society functioning only by aid of a multitude of springs and complicated machinery, the Gipsy remains indifferent to the many distressing worries to which that society is exposed. He knows nothing, for instance, of ambition, avarice, envy, vanity, intrigue, and all the other microscopic vile passions of social life; the workings of which form what we might fairly call that of the insect world of psychological life. He understands only simple and primitive contentments. The love of gaiety, dancing and music; the company of women; the habit of intoxication and incidental orgies.

Between whiles he makes a sport of his thefts, his cunning, lying and mystifications generally. These form part of his joviality, by giving it extra zest; and thus the list of his enjoyments is complete.

2.—His ecstasies.

He finds joy in life when, sleeping in a birch forest where the groups of white trees surround him, seeming like so many fair maiden forms with flowing luxurious hair dotted with emeralds coquettishly waving in graceful gesture. They seem to shrink under invisible kisses; the harmonious echoes of which can be heard as the tree bends, like a woman modestly fleeing from lover's lips.

He finds joy in life when he can follow, for hours together, the geometric figures traced aloft by the strategic evolutions of regiments of ravens; when he competes for cunning and speed with the greedy, mistrustful bustard; or for swiftness with the agile trout, as, in going with the river current, he snatches at his scaly booty.

He finds joy in life when he shakes the wild-growing tree, bringing the fruit down like savoury hail-stones, when he eats, as he gathers them from the shrubs, the red acidulated berries and strews the ground with fragments until it seems as if tinted with blood; when he moistens his satiated lips with

water from a brook, the loud bubblings of which intoxicate his ear, whilst he is impregnating his throat with its refreshing wave; when he listens to the woodpecker picking at a tree, or the rumbling of a distant mill; when he contemplates the glaucous and dried-up surface of a lake which seems to have been seized with a wintry presentiment, causing its thoughts to wander like a barque drifting with the wind; when he stretches himself out on high branches yielding him a sort of hammock; with, around him, every leaf seeming to have a nightingale's voice.

He finds joy in life when, at ease, he sees the rising sun cast its glow over the whole of Nature; and when, on perceiving the young willow trees covered with a frost causing them to resemble enormous specimens of the Indian adjutant-bird, he shakes them in sport restoring them to their native ugliness. He will take pleasure, at one time, in seeing the cow or goat apathetically happy in a rich pasturage; at another, take ironic delight in spying the tortoise or in teasing the squirrel. Sometimes he will amuse himself by searching out a favourite among the stars that dance eternally in the vast space above him, sometimes take a fancy either to an elder-tree blossom of lovely perfume or a tender branch of hawthorn or briar; these, however, soon being cast in favour of a peacock-feather; of which he makes a glorious head-gear.

He finds joy in life when he watches the incoherent glare of the fire he has set up between the oaks and elms; when, at night, he listens to the various cries of beast and bird. He will make a sport first of appearing to fight and then of making friends with any inhabitant of the solitudes; first teasing them to make them angry, then soothing them with good temper. He will behave like the little princes to their playmates, by taking away liberty only to restore it; or, like children who spoil the decorations of their mother's dress, he will abuse the prodigalities of vegetation; knowing, as they do, that he cannot exhaust the bountiful supply.

For him—to live, is to receive the emanations of Nature at every pore; to gladden his eyes with her dainties of every form and colour, and to listen to all her sonorities with greediness. It is to breathe deeply of the high wind, to crouch under the bushes in order to inhale the scents, or stretch himself out on the turf at will. Finally, it is to multiply the possession of

all these by the phantasmagoria due to brandy; and then dance, sing, have music until he is completely tired out and exhausted.

After all this, the reaction is in proportion, and he is susceptible only of violent and passing emotions—a state which, with its wonderful power of divination, antiquity no doubt meant to symbolise, when it punished with insanity the discoverer of the mandrake. It is as if it condemned those who sought to obtain from Nature more of its poetic secrets than is designed as profitable for human beings to desire.

3.—His meditations.

One can easily imagine a Gipsy, after playing about like a fawn on the meadow of his domain—a domain of which he holds possession by the simple fact of enjoying it—peeping through the foliage of the trees at the site of an existence altogether different from his own. When tired of enjoying the languor of his reveries and somnolence of his excesses one can imagine him suddenly awakened from his mute ecstasy; and, turning away from the scenes which have just enchanted him, to look in the direction of that other life so gentle, so full of peaceful security and of refinements so seductive. Couched there in the high grass damp with rain or scorched by heat, he must have often asked himself whether he could exist in the midst of a suffocating closeness which does not recognise the nomadic liberty or any of the pleasures of primitive man. He would wonder whether he could possibly resign himself to erect his tent so solidly as to leave no possibility of folding it up to go to another climate—no further power of responding to the appeal of that god which Edda appoints as master of all the gods, but which the Gipsy has made his only one—the god of "desire."

Then no doubt there would pass through his mind some visions, incoherent but charming, embodying the pictures of many joys different from his own; other activities, other affections—in short, other destinies.

By whatever name the kind of civilisation among which he lives may be known in his clouded mind, whether Brahman, Mussulman, African or European, it is bound to appear to him

confusedly as a kind of lost Eden; the door of which is close at hand, but for ever shut to him.

He would see how impassable the separating gulf which, though not wide, is profoundly deep; and it would set him thinking about the joys and transports of his own life in the heart of the forests. He would do this by way of contemning the social rules which would limit his pleasures and effeminate the virile temerity by which he obtains them. He might, by reflecting ever so little, see in imagination the black flag flying over the dungeons; the red shroud on the battlefields; and the bitter tears shed into fine lace handkerchiefs; after which he would have to acknowledge to himself in a slyly triumphant manner that, for all this misery, there is really no palliative like the immediate satisfaction of every caprice.

In all energetic natures, be they ignorant, coarse, even almost brutal as the Gipsy, or refined and accomplished as the poets, dilemmas of the description here alluded to are bound to produce an effect; particularly when liable to return to the mind like the tick-tack of some clockwork in the brain. Passionate uneasiness and depression, feverish negation and affirmation, and constantly recurring difficulties of every kind, throw over all a lugubrious light. Like festival torches which have suddenly to be used for funeral purposes, their light is acclaimed all the while joy continues to sparkle up and laughter flows on abundantly; while excitement buoys up the senses in a whirl of dance, or while bacchanalian songs obscure the vision. But, scarcely have lassitude and exhaustion enabled the mind to regain its own; scarcely is the voice of excitement silent—scarcely has the melancholy glance caught sight of the funeral torches at their task, than sickly phantoms rise before the eyes and the song which was begun in such joy becomes sad with a sadness unto death.

4.—His experience of Pain.

The implacable pride of an egoism which is unlimited because it possesses no knowledge of itself, united to a mad and unrestrained liberty, is, when reduced to its own isolated resources, very soon brought to realise its impotence—by contact with the precarious conditions of nature and human

existence. At the cold hours of hunger, infirmity, ennui or lassitude, pride recoils and liberty assumes a morose immobility. The feelings of the soul at such times are like the great shadows thrown on ripe harvest fields by passing clouds; and, if an effort is made to collect them, there would certainly (though perhaps unconsciously) arise that great spectre of

Pain

which haunts the waking hours of every human being.

Every human sentiment has been, at one time or another, overpraised or degraded beyond reason. The highest and purest of our inspirations have been, one after another, contested and laughed at. Every virtue has been discussed, and one passion has been excited in passing insult at another. Amid all these blessings and cursings (which no spiritual impulse of which we are capable has completely escaped) the one condition of the soul which has always imposed respect, arrested every sarcasm, and silenced all the outrage of a sacrilegious division, is pain. Even when it has been stifled with barbarism, or eliminated as an obstacle, the silent tribute of sympathy or admiration (according to its intensity or duration) has never been refused.

Pain sounds the depth of our aspirations and thus reveals their extent. Pain shows us specially the horror of discord, as it proceeds from an increased need of harmony. And by intensity of suffering we measure our craving for the ideal; for the more inconsolable the suffering may be, the more it rises above that vulgarity which is satisfied with an insipid well-being.

The aspect and expression of pain alike impose reflection; for who can say:

"I know you not,"

or who decree:

"Remain stranger to me"?

Men may be found to blaspheme even God, who would hesitate to offer the same indignity to pain; even when it is being borne by monsters who have freely caused others to suffer it. Man can easily impose, but he is powerless to dishonour it. For those inventions of cruelty which have always been the specially lascivious means of gratifying a mad hatred there have always been admirers. Executioners, too, there have

always been to carry out their inhuman object. But for Pain itself no audience could ever be found either to confirm an insult offered to it, or tolerate its being made an object of contempt.

5.—His depth of suffering.

From whatever source it may come, whatever errors it may cause, pain, the great forsaken one, has only to show herself, and instantly every other interest disappears. She takes first place at once in view of all; like an exiled queen, returning unexpectedly in all the vigorous majesty of her lugubrious sovereignty.

She may have indulged in excesses; she may, like an insatiable and powerful Phryne, have descended to every material debauchery or spiritual insanity; but she has only to cast her veil or mask aside and present herself in the indelible character of her august origin, in order to resume all the rights due to her royal elevation.

It would be in vain were she either to don the filthiest rags or the most brilliantly spangled robe. At the first start of her reawakening they fall in order to give place to her mourning garment. She may be crowned with fantastic garlands like Ophelia; toy with a jester's bauble in lieu of sceptre like Brutus; or seek a supreme remedy from the sword like Cato, for all trace of folly, crime or unworthiness disappears at a breath, as she rises in severe nudity and cruel austerity.

Reduced to impotence she still knows how to avail herself of other means. There is, for example, the stiletto of epigram, which kills even when thrown from a distance; for, as javelin it is none the less mortal for being gilded. And there is also the whip of satire; which she knows how to manipulate so skilfully that its thongs become coloured with the corrupt blood of a heart which had deemed itself atrophic.

When misunderstood her vengeance takes the just form of disdain; relegating to an inferior race those who venture to question her supreme importance of mournful beauty. She inspires an immense pride in those among whom she chooses to dwell, in those whom she visits during the sleepless nights, during the hours when there are no observers. She teaches

them the most profound disdain for every power and every law, every deference and every prestige. She cares not whether those of her choice are great or small, rich or poor, persecutors or victims, learned or ignorant, good or bad; for she possesses special means of visiting each and all of them.

She can as easily mount the throne as descend to the grave-digger's hut. Her pass-words enable her to enter and take her seat at the bedside of the fortunate. She glides into the philosopher's cabinet or into the artisan's workshop and even accompanies the messenger of mercy on her benevolent excursions. She tears at the breast of the offended man the day after he has taken his revenge; but at the repast of the just man oppressed she is erect and silent. She is invisible to profane regards; but, in the eyes of the angels, her eyes beam with the glories of pardon, and they escort her with the honour due to one of higher race than themselves.

Consigned by civilised life to the depth of night and obscurities of an enforced silence Pain creates for herself a variety of disguises. Being relegated to the secrecy of sterile confidences and to the mystery of tombs which will never deliver up their contents until they open to make way for the anger of God, she makes herself recognisable only to those whom she has visited with her most extenuating desolations. Those whom she has loaded with her funeral disasters, as those whose lips have tasted of her bitterest gall feel her sublime and savage presence under every transformation.

The painted face, the lying lips, the pretended resignation, the haughty silence,. the convulsive laughter, the cry of false voluptuousness, the grimaces of feigned satisfaction, the implacable rancour, the cutting derisions, the assumed rage, the unintelligible curses, and all the sinister prophecies carefully wrapped up in enticing colours—these are all so many forms behind which she hides herself. But this is after having penetrated with her mysterious poisoned dart the crevice which is always somewhere to be found; in the veil of the nun as in the warrior's armour.

Once being mistress of a soul, once having infected it with her ever-open sore, that soul becomes her plaything to be tossed hither and thither at will. Some she upraises to the level of supernatural brightness until they become transparent and dazzling; others she tosses among the asperities of mountain summits or into the dust of the valleys. Some she throws into

yawning gulfs and some she plunges into mire already tainted with blood. But, always the queen of august origin, she reserves the right of divesting herself of all disguise and of appearing suddenly in her terrifying simplicity and sublime horror; sure of causing every knee to bend at sight of her wan countenance.

Her forehead bears the divine seal unaffected, although her face reflects each torture; that face which imprints itself unexpectedly upon the startled consciousness of the oppressor, the conqueror, and the iniquitous—in that silhouette of fire which we call Remorse.

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Who could even sound the depths of that profound abyss of suffering endured by Gipsies through many generations—outcasts; all born to misfortune, degradation, hazard and want?

6.—His source of inspiration.

As soon as Pain makes her appearance in art (whether furtive or solemn, simple and insinuating, or sudden and strenuous), her influence upon the heart changes character.

She now becomes more calm and imposing, by investing her approach with trepidation, imagination and an unction quite irresistible. She is now delivered from the tinsel by which she was so often disfigured; and, shows herself as she is, calm or vehement, in a state of exasperation or passivity, but inevitably possessed of the communicative quality.

The expression of elevated sentiments, high aspirations and noble ambitions meets generally with very slow appreciation from the masses; but that of suffering always meets with an immediate and widespread approval. For, everyone who hears it carries, either under the rags of poverty or the jewels of opulence, some tender bruise, some open wound, or some badly healed cicatrice which reopens and bleeds freely at the magnetic contact of Pain, that sister of monstrous beauty the like of which everyone has begotten in his life—at least once.

Every work of art which possesses this fermenting element to a high degree will move, to the depths of their feeling, not only the best men but the best there is in each man. Such a

work cannot fail to meet with an immediate response of approval; sometimes emanating from those whom one would have thought least susceptible, but who are to be met with in all ranks of society; sometimes from the powerful and disdainful on the one hand, as from the humblest and most disdained on the other; pain, by a strange irony, sometimes taking its most vulgar modulations to the first and unfolding its sublimest chords only to the last.

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When, therefore, the immortal vagabond—the outcast of society—the banished one—the child whom no country wishes to claim and who, from birth, has known no tenderness sends his melodies vibrating into our ears, they are invariably at once understood, and eagerly listened to; in the belief that pain reposes upon a sentiment having the virtue of redeeming every wrong and every fault.

However little the Gipsy may feel his imagination and mysterious artistic gift combined suddenly taken with a desire to reproduce the impressions of his pain in a more embellished and sublime manner for himself, his vigorous organisation holds, concealed beneath a taciturn exterior, the many interior shocks and shudders of a passionate violence; and these will speak in what will be as an unknown tongue to the pretentious sadness and nebulous melancholy of hearts already withered by satiety, cloyed by illusions, and blighted by factitious desires.

CHAPTER X.

The Gipsy in Idleness

1.—His rejection of Labour: a bad bargain.

IN renouncing that labour which was allotted to man at his creation in order that, by completing the beauty of the earth left uncultivated, he might convert it into a garden of delight like the Paradise in which he was first placed and which was to serve him for a type and model, the Gipsy thought to escape from pain; for, ever since Evil was introduced into the world, Pain and Labour have been constant companions.

Ye gods!—how cruelly has he been deceived! Pain, that fate whom he had hoped to escape, arrayed herself in her blackest garb; and, without making herself known (by occasionally taking other names as well as by assuming gay costumes in order to put him off the scent) she watched for him in the midst of his indolence and want of skill.

Then, one day or another, applying her mouth to his ear, she whispered to him secrets the more distressing on account of his having thought to have become completely rid of her once for all. To have become free of her dictation; in challenging the necessities imposed by that Labour which now proved to be but a spurious second self.

The Gipsy, in refusing to eat his bread in the sweat of his brow—to court the soil by his sowings—to care for the flocks that they may multiply—or to weave their wool—to exchange their fleece for silk—or to harness himself to any load, however bright the prospect attached to it, fondly imagined he was thereby placing himself out of the reach of pain; which he regarded as the fixed result of all social enrolment.

How vain and foolish the hope thus placed in a course which has only brought pain to him the sooner! It has come to him all the more rapidly, imperiously, more gloomily and inexorably, as well as on wings which never tire. It has attacked him in his valleys and woods; reserving the hottest tears and bitterest pangs for those who had designed never to weep, but always to laugh in the sunbeam. At the same time his funereal rallying sign has reunited his unfortunate family to humanity at large, and to the confraternity of our common race; although, in repudiating all physical or intellectual labour destined to render the creature a co-operator with his creator, they seemed to desire to shut themselves out from all relationship with the rest of men and to become assimilated with the sylvan population.

In the face of this audacious defiance, creation necessarily had the last word; as the *order* of things, being identified with the *force* thereof, insisted on preserving its impassible supremacy. Far from having escaped from pain in fleeing from labour, the Gipsy saw pain continually increase; until it filled all the void which the absence of labour had created in his soul.

But, by a merciful compensation, she, the cruel one, proved also to have for him a remnant of compassion, in forming a bond of sympathy which will always exist between these two hostile brothers—brothers so impossible to reconcile as the man who never works and the man who does so always.

Pain was found to be their only point of contact, comprehension and recognition. It compelled a sympathy mutual and eternal between the Gipsy without any country to love, and the Christian full of devotion for his. It was the only affection of the soul in which they both understand one another without effort; and which, while it lasts, puts entirely to silence all their mutual dislike however engrained.

2.—Gipsy and European: an imaginary conference.

Nowhere has there been a greater temptation to separate physical from moral suffering than among the unfortunate people of whom we speak. Who can say whether they were right or wrong originally, seeing it all happened so many ages ago? It would certainly be very difficult at present to recog-

nise the traces of any innate nobleness in the individuals who compose this people; taking them separately.

But who should look for them? And, moreover, who could recognise them? How immensely difficult would it not be for a European to converse with a Gipsy upon any subject whatever; in such a way as to allow one speaker to place himself at the other's point of view—so as to enable one to pour out the secret of his interior trouble, and to ensure the other being fully able to enter into the spirit of the disclosure?

For however short a time, how could the crushing contrast between these two peoples be effaced—the manners, ideas and prejudices of one, and the manners, ideas, defiances and unreasoning repulsions of the other? How should the European know how to question, or the Gipsy to answer; while the first only considers the second with sternness and disgust, and the second (though he may fear) has no envy of the other? How should the civilised enter into the reason of the tacit syllogisms of the savage; who burns what the former adores, and loves with passion that which he holds in horror?

The first starts off with the principle that security is the fundamental condition of happiness, peace its principal element, habit its best attribute, material well-being its most precious fruit, and stability its most indispensable corollary.

The second laughs at security; for the reason that, in inaccessible caverns, he is never short of it. He is indifferent to peace; because, although he does not go to war, he is fond of combat. As for habit, he knows nothing about it; but would only need a suspicion to make him loathe its very name. Material well-being he does not trouble about; and his contempt for stability is sufficiently shown by the pleasure he takes in his moving life—joyous though perilous and uncertain.

The first few words exchanged between the two we have supposed would enable them to measure the distance between their poles; and recognise the impossibility of sounding, in any spot, conceptions of things so utterly unlike. One would shudder on hearing what charmed the other; who, in his turn, would expect the most horrible result from that upon which the other founds all his hope. The civilised man would talk about moral notions. The wild man would not only admit none; but, which is still worse, would not even understand the subject. How then should it even be possible for one to explain to the other the point of departure of their respective sentiments?

There is but one kind of movement proceeding directly from one soul to the other, one perfect mutuality of sentiment needing no sacrifice of an entire frankness and no assistance from any cold explanation. That mutual movement is the *sigh*; for, though brute animals may moan, it is man alone who sighs. But even the sigh remains enigmatical in its first and informal expression. It can only become intelligible, narrative—nay, eloquent when it acquires from art a form, and borrows from art a language, that most sublime of all tongues. For, of all the arts, music is the only one capable of distilling, as it were, the emotions which are subjected to its marvellous testing process; and of causing them to pearl forth resonant and bright, to appreciation of mind and heart, in all their original purity cleansed of every repulsive excess.

Of all the languages which it has been given to man to understand and make use of, music is the only one which the Gipsy has loved; and of all the sentiments which the Gipsy has sought to express in it *pain* and *pride* are the most remarkable.

3.—The Gipsy's indifference to Religion.

This tacit pride (the more surprising as coming from people of bad repute, and the more arrogant when associated with a haughty resignation) is inspired in them by the consciousness of conquering their full liberty from day to day. Though carried to excess, that liberty is necessary; in order to realise the resolve never to be indebted, either for favour received or tax imposed. Its necessity proceeds naturally from an unreasoning love of Nature, and from the frenzy with which the Gipsy pursues the pleasures he has received from her; as well as from the victories constantly gained over the ever recurring and terrible, but still fascinating, dangers which she, his goddess, raises in his path.

Such a wild resolution to resist every social authority, whether spiritual or temporal—a resolution, maintained with such firmness, to hold himself almost savagely aloof in every country of the globe, at the very heart of a civilisation enlightened and warmed by the most sympathetic of all religions, is certainly deplorable in itself, and regrettable on account of its rigorous consequences.

For all that, we must not forget that the pride which dictates it has its source in the highest regions of the human soul; and that in some of those regions it is capable of shining with poetic lustre.

In order that this people, brutalised and degraded, practically out of communication with the human races, should always have been able, in spite of this defect, to speak to the imagination of them all, their interior illumination and sense of refinement must have been preserved intact. The fact that a moment could arrive for them to feel the necessity of confiding their sentiments to art, and for art to become the obedient interpreter of their effusions, shows that exaggeration of pride has not vitiated its originally legitimate character.

Pride is seldom united to suffering without producing hatred; but it is well worthy of remark that the union has had no such effect upon the Gipsies. People have generally credited them with a systematic malediction of Christianity, and have thus compared them with the Israelites; but they have been quite wrong in doing so. They hate neither the Christian, nor the Mussulman, nor the Buddhist. They are quite prepared to adopt the exterior appearances of any religion, without set repugnance for them individually; but also without faith in any of their teachings.

Their only object of detestation is civilisation itself. Whether it be Brahman or Christian, Chinese or Turkish, is all one to them—they do not want it! They fly from it and reject it, moreover, for a very clear reason; that being that it brings in its train all the various kinds of slavery involved in our social life.

Varieties of religion present for them no object of any special dislike; but civil law, whatever it may be, whether benign and helpful, or threatening and ferocious, is an object to which, in their mind, death is preferable.

But, even at those unfortunate moments when there have been many provocations, they have always resisted the feeling of spitefulness likely to arise in a people excluded from all ordinary means of happiness.

If, therefore, ill-feeling has been replaced by disdain, we must remember that the disdain is friendly, if invincible; and that it shields us from all danger of the devouring flames which a violent hatred would involve.

4.—Infancy of the soul: a comparison with childhood.

That which we call "Bohemian sentiment" has accordingly escaped the shocks and disturbances to which an admixture of animosity would have exposed it. The result is that it has retained a character of vague inspiration, proceeding from an ardent love of liberty, entirely free of all care; either undertaken for itself or thrust upon it by others; and entirely indifferent either to sympathy for itself or vengeance against others. It is an infancy of the soul; conceiving nothing durable or pre-arranged, and accepting all the untoward incidents of life on condition of remaining without restraint and without duty.

This attitude is not sustained by the magniloquence of the stoic or the enthusiasm of the martyr; but simply results from the childish levity of an imagination too absorbed in itself to notice anything but what affects its own fancy and predilections.

This "infancy of the soul" (which is a state from which these beings never emerge) is, like every other infancy, unconscious of causes, perceiving only effects. Its likeness to other infancy is again shown in its love of idleness, its rejection of work, and its indifference to merit.

Completely and exclusively occupied with themselves, these big children do in most things precisely as little ones. They never, for instance, consider anything from the standpoint of anyone else, and still less do they seem capable of assimilating an idea. And everyone knows how disobedient and sometimes cruel children are, even in their innocent games; and that contradiction never causes them to reflect, but rather makes them more determined to obtain what they want. They are indifferent to the fate of any being or object which is not connected with their pleasures of the moment; and, in their anxiety to satisfy each desire at once, they seize what belongs to others as freely as if it were their own.

The slightest acquaintance with the human heart suggests at once that liberty of this kind is the forerunner of egotism; and that it is impossible to yield to every temptation of capricious desire and strain after realisation of every fancy without leaving altogether out of account what it may cause others to suffer.

But, in presence of this people wandering over all the countries of civilisation, has the latter ever borne with their child-like peculiarities?

Has it not rather shown itself hostile? and continually punished the unfortunate Gipsy for his foolish presumption?

Alas! He was so well punished that all idea of correction disappeared and he became incorrigible. Like a child who has been badly treated, punished in anger and with ill-feeling, he has lost all deference, all respect, for a society which he can only regard as a cruel stepmother.

This being his point of view, it follows naturally that he has no scruple in causing injury to any member of a family which is not his, and which he would not form part of at any price.

5.—The god of "Desire."

Man cannot with impunity disturb the equilibrium imposed upon his nature, destroy any of his faculties, disobey the laws of reason, or allow any of the springs of his stability to rust for want of employment. Should he cease to govern himself and tamper with the conditions of his earthly sojourn—though he may do so with a mere childish egoism—the inevitable consequences will equally follow.

These will be: the absence of reasoning power, a great versatility, lack of the sense of virtue, and pain unequalled, unnamable and for ever growing in a soul which is unoccupied by any object.

It becomes impossible to the Gipsy to know what other men mean by distinguishing between enjoyment and happiness. To perceive the difference he would have to admit the necessity of waiting, abstaining, renouncing, choosing, and, above all, persevering—each one of these being insupportable to his mobile and febrile imagination.

Deprived of all religion, he seems to have instinctively evolved the Scandinavian god of Desire; and this is indicative of a feeling which we must be careful not to misunderstand.

Unquenchable desire is one of the greatest treasures of the human soul. It is the salutary leaven which alone gives zest

to our existence: the ferment and aroma which preserve it from a state, the equivalent of bodily decay and corruption. For the mind, it is precisely the same intangible and imponderable element as that which, for the body, we call *life*; to which it owes movement, respiration, development, activity, sensibility—in fact, all the characteristic signs which are the contrary of *death*; inert, passive and dissolving.

Without an inspiration fired by incessant *desire* the human being would vegetate, a mere biped plant. He would remain a sociable animal truly; but he would be less industrious than the ant, less intelligent than the bee, and less disciplined than the beaver. He could have no idea of amelioration or progress; nor could he, while still on earth, imagine and hope for a better world on high.

Desire never satisfied, like a thirst never quenched, is the sure guarantee of every achievement to which man is predestined; and, as it were, a payment on account of his future inheritance. At each miscalculation, at each disillusion and deception, there may be tears forced from him. But each frustration of hope is like holy unction which consecrates and befits him for his task. That task is the attainment of the first of all royalties—that of becoming sovereign of the earth; and, even beyond both earth and nature, towers that insatiable and unconquerable Desire which the beauties of the one can never content or the magnificences of the other ever extinguish.

6.—The Gipsy life and civilisation.

The permanent illegality of desire, when it is uncontrolled, collides with other equally precious faculties and rightly disgusts the moral sense. But if we recall our attention to the conduct of society (of which the Gipsies are content with the remains of banqueting and the left-off clothing) what shall we see?

That the Gipsy never hurts it in anything which causes it to flourish. He does not try to strangle it; as does that other nation which, on that very account, seems to be esteemed by it all the more. Nor does he threaten its security even (on the worst supposition) if he makes off with a parcel of its goods. But, on the other hand, we see that same society, with

its arrogant sense of superior virtue, just as much entangled in the mire of its prosaic egotism, just as deprived of pity, justice, charity or conscience, as the Gipsies are with all their poetic egoism, however turbulent and furious.

In our society we have rapine, pillage, theft, burglary and murder. Add to these the refinements of either gradual or quick poisoning; lying, either bare-faced or hypocritical; and calumny, either sharp, like a dagger, or dirty and viperous. Add to these again adultery, bebauchery, prostitution and promiscuity; all existing there, latent and tacit, like sleeping reptiles in a vase covered over with flowers. You cannot be sure of not being robbed on the highway, or assaulted for the same purpose in a wood. Honest folk are continually liable to have the fruit of years of labour, their honour and good name, or their dearest affections, taken from them by some brutal hand; that is, when they are not carried off by sly measures and drawn into the impenetrable dens of the tricksters.

It is in our society that fraud, from its high position, vents insolence upon truth humiliated; that violence gives a knowing smile to justice (the forms of which it finds to suit its purpose); that cupidity working with the force of duplicity, or duplicity of force, throws ironic glances upon the man who is in the right, and whom they have despoiled. It seems almost as if it were in their minds to ask—

"How much the better off are you for your gift of reason?"

In the midst of civilisation those heart fibres which culture of the intelligence tends to soften are fully exposed to the danger of being bruised and broken by the many evil expedients invented by envy, intrigue, duplicity, false witness, libertinage and vengeance. The governing power in this society is a form of egotism the most implacable in its heartlessness, the most inexorable in its ferocity, and the most dissembling in its effrontery. Its rods are none the less cruel for being provided with golden handles; and do not, for that reason, cause any less blood to flow from the just and the feeble.

In our society the inexperienced youth, the lone widow, the forsaken veteran, the naïve scholar, the dreamy poet and the man who is well-to-do but unsuspecting are not likely to meet with a fate which the Gipsy would be disposed to envy; especially if he could be made aware of all the secrets, afflic-

tions, tribulations, humiliations and heart-breakings incidental to it. His immorality could not feel as if it had much to blush for; as compared with that of the strong and the shrewd in our civilisation.

It would hence seem justifiable to ask of the nations who look at the Gipsy from such a lofty eminence whether it is really their pure morality—whether it is their unrivalled evangelical holiness which dictates the profound contempt they have for him. The unfortunate effects of his poetic egoism fall, at all events, only on himself, whilst the canting egotism of civilisation imposes itself with audacity upon victims whom it defames at the same time that it ruins them.

The poetic egoism of the Gipsy does not disguise its giving over of the feeble to the strong. But, whereas this is done by him in a manner less tenacious, unpremeditated and without system, the prosaic egotism of society enlaces the weak-minded and unsuspecting victim with the bands of trickery; arranging that force itself shall fall into the traps laid for it by astuteness.

Between this and the method of the Gipsy (whose ignorance of well-being and intellectual idleness should be some excuse) we cannot see any distinction which justifies the Gipsy's punishment in being much the greater.

The impulse which spurs the Gipsy on to the quick possession of the objects of his desires takes its root in the noblest regions of our nature; although, in his case, it has taken an unhealthy character. This is a trait which Christians especially should not misunderstand, however disastrous its effects; particularly as they cannot fail to note that the Gipsy's sufferings, after all, are caused by his habit of too much feeling without thought—too much dreaming without calculation, and too much imagining without judgment.

CHAPTER XI.

The Gipsy at Work.

1.—Zigano and the Shepherd.

AMONGST the Gipsies the passionate love of Nature is too palpitating, too vehement, too united to the imagination and to the taste for the glittering, the spectacular, the unforeseen, and the diverse, ever to show the least sign of a love-sentiment placid and idyllic. With pastoral peoples the love of Nature gives rise to attachments so gentle, so intimate and calm, that, at the sight of them, one immediately pictures conjugal unions in which the tenderness is mutual and extreme.

Such unions, however, entirely lack the languishments of desire, the ravishment of possession, the adoring raptures, and the uneasiness of foreboding. They know nothing of the jealous pain, the amorous impetuosities, the sudden recoveries, or the extravagant ardours which with the more primitive passions both embellish reality and are by it embellished in return. These various incidents are peculiar to passion which desires in suffering, and suffers in desiring. They are unknown to the tranquil, though complete, attachments more comparable to the shepherd's love of Nature.

These exemplary unions, with their love for their various sizes of uprising offspring, their interest in the children's games, in their physical development, and in their budding intelligence, may be compared to the love which the primitive pastors evince for the animals in their care, and to the interest which they also show in their up-growing. The continual association with innocence, the protection of beings so graceful

and feeble, the affectionate relations which ensue and which are characterised by a mutual gentleness and goodwill, are charming to all; and therefore completely engross the married couples whose horizon does not go beyond their domestic solicitudes.

But patriarchal and pastoral families are alike unable to sympathise with souls whose existence depends upon far stronger emotions; souls who require objects of love which they can embrace and press closely to their bosoms with ardour. Such as these must surely find sickly and insipid the first care of the infant, or that which troupes of sheep and lambkins require.

The Gipsy loves Nature in too poetical a manner to give much heed to its maternal functions. Milk-food, though amply within his reach, has very little place in his dietary where more violent flavours are in request; those of capsicum, pepper, garlic, onion, mint and other seasonings; which prepare far better for indulgence in wine or alcohol.

The Gipsy accordingly does not trouble about the fair Ceres who feeds the honest labourer, causing milk and honey to flow for the simple countryman. He refuses to invoke her or to offer her sacrifices of those cakes made from the finest flour, with cheese and butter and other produce of the land, as customary. His fevered love passes over the head of the placid goddess with her crown of corn, in search of more ardent enjoyments and thrills of voluptuousness beyond her empire.

Such thrills are only to be found in those mysterious regions of flame where Proserpine has presided since she was taken away from the fields by Jupiter to become initiated in a more acrid form of happiness.

2.—Zigano the Blacksmith.

Deaf to all advice (including that relating to self-interest as may be well understood) the Gipsy is unwilling to pay for any advantage, however considerable, by even a momentary abdication of his caprice. He will not engage to give even a small portion of his time on any conditions whatever. But the necessity of procuring bread (though he neither sows nor reaps) and clothes (though he neither spins nor weaves) has

at least induced him to become sometimes a blacksmith. The plough-share would seem to him only to cut the ground that his foot might take root in it; the trade of weaver would seem to effeminate him by placing a shuttle in his hand. And he would feel himself as much disgraced in being attached to the soil—he, the child of no country and no home—as to see himself condemned to unravel skeins like a woman in petticoats.

To handle iron and to work with fire, out in the sun, or under the stars, and by the side of the flowing water (where we generally find the construction serving as the village forge), that is agreeable to him. The noise of the bellows amuses him, the danger occupies him, the rhythmic cadence of the hammer strokes gratifies his ear. To shoe the horses goes with his feeling, because it brings him into relation with a living being; and the thousand little unforeseen incidents of the occupation animate him and prevent monotony; besides which he is not shut up in any house, or called upon to use any but his familiar primitive instruments. For all that, however, he will only submit to it as a momentary pastime; with the result that his knowledge of the trade rarely goes beyond what is necessary for shoeing horses, forging nails, or repairing the plough or harrow.

Borrow very happily depicts the groups formed by the Gipsy-blacksmiths in citing a charming metaphor drawn from one of their songs devoted to this sort of work. It is entitled

"The Sparks,"

and runs in the following manner:

Like a hundred delightful maidens
They appear
Rose-colour or empurpled
But after designing
Most graceful circles
That same instant
They disappear.

Might not one say that the entire Gipsy soul is figured in that *spark* of desire? It shines, it charms, and it enflames him; and then, while dazzling him by its capricious circles, at that very instant it expires—has disappeared and is no more.

Sure of finding in each hamlet a forge and a little iron (when completely at the end of his resources) the Gipsy never

has recourse even to this *work*, if it may so be called, except when at his most embarrassing extremity. In order to put an end as quickly as possible to the necessity, slight and temporary as it is, of remaining in one place, he makes use of it principally as a means of ingratiating himself; in order to carry out some bargain, and for theft or trickery of some kind. He finds it lead to a slight comradeship with the simple countryman; whose credulity being easily trapped by his talkativeness is a guarantee of impunity, for he has little fear of ill-will, vengeance or reprisals. After having gulled and cheated him, he disappears and is soon lost among the others of his company; after which he goes off to seek fortune elsewhere. As long as he is able to provide for himself he does not quit his kingdom, the free, open air of solitude, in places difficult of access; and even these he fortifies with a row of dusty waggons, placed like an entrenchment round a bivouac, as a protection against dangerous or unwelcome incursions. He scarcely ever goes into the towns or villages, except pressed or compelled thereto by want. His imaginary Egypt is what he prefers; and, if its real name is a mystery, he treasures it something like a forsaken child would cling to any mysterious mark upon its cradle, which might prove to be a souvenir or perhaps a hope.

Besides iron, the Gipsy is willing to handle gold; but only in its raw state. He is to be met with in various countries, and particularly in Hungary, as gold-washer; where he is almost exclusively employed in the auriferous rivers. This occupation being in the open air allows him to remain face to face with nature. It also places him in contact with the water element, the animation of which is so welcome to him that he performs the duty well.

Not having any great complaint to make against him, the government allows him this means of making a living, the most harmless of any he has yet undertaken.

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One might easily imagine that he was playing a trick upon the society which makes him an exile; in helping to prepare the infectious ore which he knows will shortly be used to nourish every vice, settle every dirty action, and well reward every crime.

3.—Zigano the Horseman.

The Gipsy has two favourite animals, the choice of which being significant should not be passed over without remark. In that of the horse he shows his sympathy, as one may say, for the heroic instinct which characterises the courser; whose faithful service cannot, like that of the dog, be stated as the mere protection of man and safe keeping of his property—these being simply household preoccupations inferior to his nature. Not the mere inert rough hand which brings him his food does the horse love. He kisses and fondles with the gratitude of a devoted servant that finer intelligent hand which, in patting his neck, causes him to feel a thrill of pleasure; for it is as if his master said:

"I am pleased with you, my good friend."

The only hand he understands is that which holds the bridle-rein, and the only one he willingly obeys is that which knows how to employ his strength, bring his grace into relief, and enjoy with him his noble faculties in the act of stimulating them.

It is not to a mere groom, but to his cavalier, that the horse gives himself for life or death. He is capable of sacrificing his life in the supreme effort crowning a flow of passion; and all in order to serve the projects of the master whose sentiments he has espoused with a devotion almost human—*more* than human, as many hold.

The voice which flatters his ear is not that of the crowd around him as he stands at rest; but that of the superior being, his master. Vibrating and pure, manly and firm, he hears it calling him by his name, as its owner leaps lightly into the saddle. It means to him his master's will; either to cover the ground in all speed, to gamble merely and prance—or, haply, to press on to the fight, to do or die.

Among all man's four-footed friends the horse is the only one which serves the higher wants relating to his moral passions. The functions of other animals seem dictated by his material wants, incidental to the care of his person; but those of the horse concern rather the activity of his emotions. The only dumb creature who understands those painful impatiences which his master's heart is often called upon to sustain,

or who is ready to second the bitter resolutions of his hatred and join in the courage inspired by his ambitious illusions; his furious galop will emulate rapidity of thought in devouring time to gain the desired object at any price.

He not only knows how to live and to fight with his master, but to be a friend to him without any limit. He will die to take his lord to victory, to help him out-distance the enemy, or to bring him back one minute sooner to the arms of his beloved. He shares equally in the emotions of love and patriotism; in the hope which the clarion awakens, as in the despair which valorously succumbs.

It may be objected that, although the Gipsy is very familiar with the horse, he is no good horseman. That is, however, entirely immaterial. His mode of life does not allow him the luxury, any more than it imposes upon him the necessity, of possessing a thoroughbred; of owning one of those proud animals of pedigree, carefully trained as the constant companion of man. The Gipsy is, on the contrary, more like the Arab; who, though consenting to abandon his harem to the victorious enemy, will rather shoot his horse than suffer him to pass into the hands of another master.

Thus the Gipsy, though forbidden to approach the aristocratic type of steed, cannot nevertheless fail to have, even if confused, a highly practical notion of the superiority of this over other domestic animals; by reason of the saving help which it is always ready to render him when he is bent upon rapid flight.

That one feature makes the Gipsy's horse his companion. And surely the companionship must be admitted to be quite well merited, when we reflect that it is in return for the marvellous sensation of having the power of his every limb increased and multiplied in the hour of need. For, in the very act of bestriding his horse, the Gipsy feels that the animal's limbs have suddenly become his own. He and his horse are now one; the two having in a single instant become transformed into a centaur.

Moreover, who can say whether the Gipsy's love of his horse is not in some occult manner the defence of his own case, which in his heart he entertains? His love is perhaps a confession made in presence of the animal who is often better than man; just as he, treated as a human animal, is often better than civilised specimens of the race.

It would be hard to maintain that the Gipsy is not even persuaded that there are instincts in the horse quite beyond those of eating and drinking; that his four-footed friend might not be hero and poet in *his* own special manner. For he, well knowing himself to be both hero and poet in *his* own special manner, sees himself completely misunderstood by those who appear to be his fellow-creatures; and therefore this intelligent though dumb comrade is well entitled to his friendship.

4.—Zigano the Showman.

It is quite a different motive which causes the Gipsy to take a fancy to the bear; which he takes pains to tame, sufficiently to be able to make a certain income out of the exhibition of the animal's grotesque dances. Having discovered its whereabouts, he gives it chase in the Carpathian mountains, where its nature is perhaps not quite so ferocious as elsewhere. When he takes a young cub he places it on an iron sheet which has been heated, and plays to it in music of a very noisy kind and of very strongly accentuated rhythm. The beast at once lifts its front paws and stands upright; raising one of its hind paws after the other, in order to remove it from the scorching surface, and timing its movements to the sounds of the tune which is penetrating its ears.

When the cub has sufficiently learned how to make its movements agree with the melody, it has only to hear it played in order to go through its cumbersome valse apparently with a good grace; because it knows that, should it be tardy in its gambols, the hot plate will be slipped beneath its paws.

The curious disposition of things which allots these performing bears to the Gipsy, corresponds with his taste for jugglery, mockery and buffoonery; anything, in fact, capable of causing a laugh or provoking convulsive paroxysms; although one would scarcely think him capable of such desires to judge by his pride when wearing a new caftan, in marking his apathy when luxuriating in idleness, or his melancholy at a moment of pain.

With his horse the Gipsy feels superior to the civilised societies, which would tread him under foot if he had no power

to escape from them; and, with his bear, he is conscious of showing himself superior to the animals (with which an attempt is made to assimilate him)—the equal even of those who pride themselves upon their fine speech and song. The horse confirms him in his pride by the heroism he places at his service; whilst the bear amuses him and gives free play to all his facetious instincts.

When the Zygan is out with his bear he amuses himself as much as his public with the animal's cumbersome movements —with the ungraceful jumps and grotesque hurry of a beast stupid enough to let himself be muzzled and compelled to dance while some one else beats time. The Gipsy's esteem for the horse is matched by his contempt for the bear; so, when he hears the applause of the crowd around his exhibition, he chuckles to reflect that they have not been able either to muzzle him or make him dance to their tune.

To that may be added the pleasure of gaining a trifle of money in this way; which naturally renders it one of the most agreeable windfalls occurring in a life of such sterile mobility.

5.—Zigana the Fortune-teller.

When children born among the Gipsies happen to be of tender or delicate organisation they are rapidly worn by the frequent return of spasms of joy and pain, of imperfect nourishment, followed by nervous cramp; of the continually burning impressions in which they are maintained by a life constantly exposed to every devouring element of both the physical and moral order.

The more energetic constitutions, although longer able to support these conditions, experience no less a latent diminution of strength; and soon feel the paralytic effect of these influences to be reaching the more delicate fibres of their soul. But this violent emotional routine rarely fails to invest those who are gifted with sufficient vital force to resist it with a power magnetically divinatory; the influence of which extends to their senses and the functions of their organs. The seat of passion then becomes more and more intense, until it takes complete possession; absorbing all moral and intellectual ac-

tivity, and endowing the volitions with a singular magic by sharpening the perceptions in a marvellous manner.

The women especially (being less endowed with the counterpoise of reflective faculties and comparative operations of the mind) acquire a kind of supernatural vision, an extraordinary intuition in this tropical climate of passion. This allows them to know by presentiment and foresight secrets not revealed to them by any fact, but that psychological deductions of prodigious velocity enable them instantly to discover. Moreover, the vivacity of their impressions is instantly catching, its inoculation is infallible as that of a morbid germ, it is communicated by touch, and startles like an electric shock. A few expressions occurring in course of speech, a few rhymes, or a few verses of which the accents are inordinately impressed by passion, suffice to give a hint of what a listener may intend to conceal.

The Gipsy woman (who is familiarised with the symptoms of passion) distinguishes at once the lean cheek and fiery eye of a woman; she knows instantly whether it is with a movement of restless hope or of painful fear that the hand is extended in order to read from it what remains to be dreaded, or may still be looked for. She easily observes, from the disdainful curl of the lip, or the folds hollowed between the eyebrows, whether the young man, whose anxiety agitated him to the point of addressing himself to her, meditates vengeance, tires of uniformity, is indignant at constraint, desires to be loved, or is already jealous of a favoured rival. She recognises also the foolish security of beauty and of youth, the presumption and infatuation of prosperity which seems to brave misfortune; and she knows too well the terrible suddenness of fate's decrees and the vulnerability of our hearts not to be on her guard against the smiles of fortune and not to predict unknown dangers to those who either do not wish to foresee anything, or think that everything has been already foreseen.

The Gipsy-woman, too, has faith in her own diagnosis. Thinking no doubt that we carry within ourselves the generating principle of our own destiny, she easily persuades herself that her predictions will be accomplished sooner or later, in one way or another. Her care is simply to clothe them in a form palpable to the imagination; diving into her memory in order to emerge with some picture of it. The picture is of what it is likely to be, after the secret desires of the soul she

is reading have brought about the crisis she has predicted, from reading the hand and heart; whether it be of success or catastrophe.

How can one be surprised therefore if people should expect those who are so capable of reading the soul and of discovering the passions there enchained to be prepared also to unfold the secrets of the future?

Every passion has intuition of another's presence, especially when it applies itself to note the effects of its companion upon bodily habit, the vocal accent and gesture; when it has learned to decipher the obscurities written upon the worn facial surface; which is always more unsettled and enquiring as the heart is more excited, and always more expressive as it is more ravaged. The Gipsy-woman is well aware that a stony nature will never address itself to her.

The gift of predicting the future which she has always claimed—a claim that has been by general consent allowed—is in practice a pure empiricism and an even more bare-faced decoy. But, for all that, it is founded upon a popular belief far too deeply rooted not to have been inspired by the rarely deceptive instinct which actuates the people in respect of certain truths; of which it does not pretend to know either the sense or the range. It is simply that they have been too often convinced, for them to doubt any longer the correctness of the revelations of these wandering sibyls.

Little by little, and however unwilling at first, everybody lent themselves to the belief that the future was no more hidden from them than the past; and that coming events were as open to their view as those of the present time, because of its being indifferent to them into which direction of time or space they cast their look of clairvoyance.

Not being able therefore to explain in any other way their power to reveal the secrets which those whom they penetrated with their regards imagined to be completely buried within their own souls—the good or evil days they have encountered, the trials they have undergone, the fate which awaits them, the coming happiness or death which approaches—it became natural to regard them as possessed of super-human powers. The belief in their possession of such powers seemed also confirmed by their preference of forest-life to the comforts of civilisation.

But is not so fine a tact—one so rapid and subtle as to read

the sentiments and resentments of others merely in the effect produced upon them by their own internal feelings—is this not, after all, an occult power?

Is not this power of sudden divination, giving a prompt intuition of what will be by the rapid unveiling of what is—the power of predicting future fruits by learning to recognise the actual germs, one to be described as occult?

It is therefore not without cause that ordinary folk attribute to the Gipsy-woman's knowledge an origin of abnormal kind. Not without cause does it for thousands of times happen that great ladies as well as simple shepherds, village-girls as well as mighty lords, take their turn in asking to have the knot of their existence unravelled by the olive-coloured woman with head remindful of a bust in bronze, eyes of white agate, hair seeming to reflect the blue of polished iron, and lips as red as a pomegranate flower with which to pronounce her sonorous words of mystery.

With her slim figure, downcast eyes and gentle heaving of the breath, she presents a charming appearance of commiseration, while she pours into ears trembling with impatience either the unexpected good-fortune or the knell of some fate of terror.

It is not without reason that for centuries there have been constantly reproduced such scenes as these; which seem so entirely in keeping with the moment when a crowd is gathering round about the musicians, whose rough cadencing marks the changes of the violin-player. He, after making his instrument sparkle with brilliancy like the fanfare of a fairy march, suddenly breaks off into a heart-breaking lamentoso. The Gipsy women could never have retained their influence over so many people drawn from every social sphere, from the highest to the lowest and from various nations, if there had been no spark of merited sympathy seasoning the attraction which, not unmixed with fear, attaches to their rich-coloured rags.

6.—Zigana and her Occultism.

Vain attempts have been sometimes made to connect the amulets, incantations and principles of chiromancy of the Gipsy-woman, young or old, with some belief. The authors of such enquiries do not seem to have been connected with

one another; but, nevertheless, to have been all imbued with the idea and hope of conjuring evil by parrying the destructive efforts of some power superior and hostile to man. The dread which surrounds the forces of nature has been the means of preserving among these women certain invocations belonging to a worship of which the sense is now lost, but certain fragments of the rites of which still serve as pretext to their enchantments. They also underlie their reputed sorceries, as well as form the origin of their so-called witchcraft and connivance with the devil.

There is sometimes a positive appearance of their having inherited customs which were formerly credited with a magical range and were supposed to place them in contact with the spirits. Such spirits have been known in all latitudes under the names of sylph, peri, gnome, satyr, triton or fairy; but there were others whose more sombre object was only to satisfy men's desires at the sacrifice of their souls.

End of Part I.

PART II.

GIPSY LIFE IN ITS RELATION TO ART.

FRANZ LISZT

CHAPTER XII.

Personal Relations with Gipsies.

1.—Juvenile Impressions.

HAVING for a long time been drawn into relation with Bohemians by more than one kind of personal sympathy, we have been naturally led to take a warm interest in matters concerning them generally, but especially in whatever might happen to possess glossarial value in interpreting the text of their art—that being a subject to which we have for a long time devoted considerable attention, study and care.

We may, in fact, describe the remembrance of gipsies as one intertwined with those of our earliest childhood, and identified with some of the keenest impressions of our existence. And, as if to cultivate the sympathetic feeling, it happened also that, later on, we led the life of a wandering virtuoso, precisely as they do. The great difference was that, whereas they, with their tent life, had taken centuries to traverse the various countries of Europe, we abridged the age-long destiny by covering the same ground in a very few years.

It may perhaps be counted as an advantage that our journey was the more commodious. So, undoubtedly, it was; but, on the other hand, it was by no means so picturesque. But we resembled them in the fact that, through seeking to the extent of our power to give to the unfortunate instead of profiting by the prosperous, we have often remained a stranger to the populations we visited. Like them, too, we have been inces-

santly striving towards an ideal; though, here again, a difference must be recorded—our search having been in the region of art and theirs in nature.

In early youth there were few things we found more striking to the imagination than the enigma boldly proposed by the Bohemians before every civilised dwelling, palace or cottage at which they chanced to come in search of a paltry gift; either in exchange for a few words murmured quite softly in the ear; for some dance-tunes that no one could imitate, or for songs which (although they electrified the young folks who were in love) no lover ever attempted to imitate. There was no one whom we did not question when we were still very young in the hope of hearing the explanation of this charm; experienced by everybody, yet never defined. All in vain. The charm, though felt by all, was one which nobody seemed interested to unravel.

At that time we were merely the frail pupil of an austere master; and, as for our opinion of any artistic charm, it need only be said that the only outlet to the world of fantasy of which we had any idea was that of which a slight glimpse is obtained through the architectural scaffolding of notes, carefully adjusted according to learned principles. But that poor view only made us the more curious to find out how it was that such attraction should be exercised by horny hands; either passing rough bows over the strings of worthless instruments, or striking the brass with apparently thoughtless abruptness.

To make it even more mysterious these bronzed faces, upon which the burning sun seemed to exercise no power, used to haunt us continually in our day-dreams. They seemed to us as if they had become prematurely withered; partly by the inclemency of the seasons, but also by that of the unregulated —or rather galvanising emotions of their wild life. We kept on asking ourselves what was the reason of those contemptuous smiles. What was the meaning of the sardonic incredulity which seemed to laugh from their tawny eyes; coupled, as it was, with gleams that flash without giving any light. It was all mystery; for, though we were charmed with their soft elastic dances (which, though rebounding and provocative, seemed abrupt and impetuous), yet their sudden arrivals and hasty retreats to their former forest haunts puzzled us altogether; as did also the sight of their camps; in which the fire,

whilst being fed with resinous twigs, brought irresistibly to mind the cloud of incense surrounding the tripod of a Pythoness.

Young as we were, we could even then mentally perceive that, instead of that eternal succession of days, misty and dull, which forms the drab background of our existence, and which is only occasionally relieved either by some pleasure, or, it may be, darkened still more by pain—instead of that, the Gipsy's life is a closely woven tissue of items of either pleasure or suffering, as chance may have it. These follow closely upon one another without any repose, and are instantly either caused or consoled as they arise by one or other of their elements of voluptuousness and forgetfulness.

Of these there are four; namely, love, song, dance and drink: four chasms of perdition, it may be; but still, four glittering stars; four fountains of a flavour to excite thirst, the satisfaction of which promotes forgetfulness.

2.—Visit to a Gipsy Camp.

On our first return to Hungary we had a natural desire to take up the thread of our first experiences, and to revisit the hordes by whose picturesque tohu-bohu we had formerly been so much struck. We longed all the more to hear those rhythms and harmonies again on account of their appearing to us as emanating from another planet—they were so completely different from anything which European art permits, or even countenances, in any way, in music.

But, however intolerable in the sight of European art, this *was* music. It was most unquestionably music; for it could speak, it could narrate, it could even sing. And how it sang! How sad were the accents with which it greeted us! They seemed like the voices of men in exile; like the pleading of the imprisoned bird; like the sigh of the orphaned soul; or the plaint of bereaved affection. We understood it well—this music; for it seemed to us like a native language. But the fact is even more powerful that not we alone were in subjugation to it; for upon every one who heard it its empire quickly fell.

Rather than seek the wandering Zygan within the narrow

walls of a room walled in by other rooms, or of a house built in by other houses, or in the narrow mephitic streets of towns the dust of which he gladly shakes from his feet—knowing that those feet far more cheerfully suffer the thorns of bushes or furze strewing the parched land than the paving stones of our inhospitable cities—we preferred to go and find him in his woods and fields; in his camp, amongst all the confusion incidental to his journeyings and stoppages.

It was in pursuance of this resolve that there we found him; with all the contrasts of age, passion and humour, and without any mask or conventional colouring whatever. We went in order to see them all as they really are; to be amongst them all; to sleep, as they do, under the blue sky; to play with their children; to make presents to the little girls; to speak to their chiefs; and, finally, to hear them play for their own pleasure and public by the light of their own fires, the situation of which depends entirely upon chance. We had also the motive that by doing this we should on our return be the better in a position to deny the bestiality of which they are so often accused.

Accordingly, on the occasion of which we now speak, we had the honour of reclining upon *bunda** skins, with several of which a kind of seat of honour had been built. The base of this was composed of plants; which, being freshly separated from their roots, still preserved their fragrance. It was in the middle of a colonnade of ash-trees; and these, being of considerable height, seemed with their long arms to be sustaining the blue satin of the sky—the whole effect being that of a vast pavilion ornamented by the draperies of the vaporous clouds. To complete the picture the moss beneath our feet, being besprinkled with tiny flowers, recalled to mind those Mexican carpets which are made for the kings; and are woven from the plumage of the humming-bird.

Such was the scene in which we passed hours in listening to the best Bohemian orchestras, playing with an indescribable animation. It was an animation of the best kind; for it was inspired by the beauty of the day and assisted by the dancing of the women, who supplemented the effect with their tambourines and little cries of various kinds of mimicry. There

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* The "bunda" is a pelisse made from sheep-skin.

was no lack of brandy; and the glinting metal of little coins was in startling evidence from every finger.

In the intervals of repose we could hear the exasperating noise of the wooden axles, badly greased, of the waggons; which were being drawn back in order to make more room for the dancers. This was soon mixed with some frantic cries which the youngsters set up in their language, and which the musicians courteously translated as

Éljen Liszt Ferencz.

Surprises frequently occurred. To begin with, there were the exclamations caused by a sight of the succulent meat and fine honey which formed part of the repast. Then, there were the wild cries, somersaults, capers and general turbulence with which the children accompanied their nut-cracking; besides which some real battles took place over some bags of peas in dispute. There were also some shrewish old women with hair erect, high forehead, inflamed eyes, distended nostrils, toothless jaws and shrivelled neck. But, in spite of all these defects, as well as of the fact that their hands were trembling like leaves unable to withstand a draught of air, they danced some sarabands in honour of the festival; which had not only satisfied their hunger, but flattered their palate by the introduction of some unaccustomed delicacies.

The men, after examining some horses which had recently been given them, put on quite a heavenly smile; showing off to advantage their teeth, which were as white as snow. After that they started imitating castanets by cracking the joints of their fingers; which are always long and charged with electricity. Still uncertain, they began throwing their caps into the air; following this by strutting about like peacocks. Then, they started examining the animals again; when, suddenly, as if incited by a gratitude which they had all the while been trying to express and the true manifestation of which had only just occurred to them, they had recourse to a nobler medium. Flying to their violins and cymbals, they began a real fury of excitement. The Frischka was not long in rising to a frenzy of exaltation; and, then, almost to delirium. In its final stage it could only be compared to that vertiginous and convulsive wheeling motion which is the culminating point in the Dervish ecstasy.

3.—Traits of Gipsy Character.

We also made an attempt to get the old men of the horde into conversation; asking them to recount to us some interesting episode from their remembrances. But their chronicles scarcely go beyond the present generation; and, even in respect of that short period, it is necessary to help them to trace the course of events; for, without that, they would be quite unable to combine the facts for purposes of narration.

The only means of obtaining anything like an adequate account of any episode is to extract the detail from them question by question. But when, by this means, one has succeeded at last in joining up the whole thread of an adventure, they experience an incredible pleasure; old emotions, long since obliterated by the impression of subsequent events, coming back to them in all their original intensity. They seize with so much the more eagerness upon this revival of their ancient sentiments as they scarcely know of this kind of pleasure. But, when once aroused, they depict (not alone with interest but with a strange kind of poetry containing images more and more Oriental according to the degree of their loquacity) the scenes which they have thus been enabled to evoke.

They confine themselves in general to the things which they have actually seen. Events in which they play any part of action do not strike them as anything more than passing manifestations of passion; and are not viewed by them in any relation to causes arising from settled projects or designs. Passions, with them, being of excessive vehemence, without either rule, constraint, or any need for concealment, it follows that the dramas in which they take part both unfold and conclude very quickly. Their originality is due to the form assumed by the momentary impulse of the hero; which is more or less energetic, fantastic, or melancholy, as the case may be.

This naturally amounts to an exclusion of that slow gradation of facts and of imperceptible changes which we regard as essentials, produced by the accumulating force of a succession of occurrences; like strata in a natural formation. We, on the contrary, make a point of considering these incidents and accidents, however trivial they may seem in appearance; because we recognise them as casting the fructifying seed, from which ultimately the climax of destiny arises.

For the Gipsies all this simply cannot exist; being rendered impossible by the simplicity of their mutual relations. They are all far too wilful and too prone to cynicism to be prepared to endure delay, or to practise patience; their sole idea being either prompt possession of what they desire, or prompt vengeance upon the cause of resistance. If there is any exception to this at all it can only be when one of them, being frustrated, bears away with him, like some wounded animal, visible evidence of the severity of the fray from which he has just emerged. In such a case he would probably first do what he could to hide his wound; and, in the next stage, quit his tribe and join another one. In addition to such conflicts with strangers the same thing may happen after a quarrel amongst themselves, as an act either of jealousy or of violence due to some other cause.

There is extreme difficulty in gathering from their lips anything more than mere fragments of history and disconnected anecdotes; attributed, sometimes to one and sometimes to another. The result of this is that to write a complete biography of any individual would be a practical impossibility. Their memory confines itself to culminating points; seeming only to recognise such moments as are sufficiently eventful to cause their happenings still to vibrate. In such instances as that, however, the remembrance seems to hover about seeking a resting place; like flakes of wool falling upon the bushes.

Strangely enough, it is highly rare to obtain from any individual the complete account even of any event in which he was the principal actor; and though, from witnesses of it, quite a poetic version of the matter may frequently be obtained, we have to be on our guard against the trickery which is likely to be exercised in order to make the occasion one for obtaining a dole.

Over their own passions a strict silence is always kept; proceeding apparently from both pride and shame—a sort of masculine modesty.

The rule is—never to speak of their companions at all; but, if any exception is made, it is either in the case of the dead or of those who have deserted them; and, even of either of these, a mere word, sign or exclamation is deemed sufficient. Such descriptions, when obtained, resemble one another so closely as to be like so many pearls of similar colour upon a string. But it is only reasonable to make allowance in all

cases for the possibility of the companion spoken of having a bone to pick with the police; and for the danger, in that connection, of something alluded to innocently and without precaution turning out to have been indiscreet.

4.—Second visit to a Gipsy camp.

The time came for us to return to Hungary again after another absence—to return to the same plateaux in the same comitat of Oldenburg—to those plains, grey and monotonous but placid and happy, which had formed our first horizons. Landscapes, calm and peaceful, with a pale brown light and enclosed by circular lines without a break, they seemed like ocean horizons to give an inkling of the globe's design.

We had not forgotten our former hosts; nor had they forgotten us. At service, at the poor little church where we had formerly and with such fervour bent our little knees in devotion, the Mass was sung—indeed, so very much sung, that, for once, literally the whole of the assistants took part in it. This was in honour of the return of that same little child of whom the gossips of the village had predicted when, long ago, he went away in one of those light vehicles that perform the rural service, that he would one day come back to them in his own carriage.

On coming out of the church we were met—or rather set upon—by a whole crowd of Bohemians, more vociferous and noisy than ever. Our old schoolmaster was a party to this surprise; as we afterwards learned from the beautiful speech he made, the manuscript of which he gave us. There, to our great and mutual amusement, it was stated that, in point of scholarship, the pupil could now give points to his old magister. He it was who had let the Gipsies know that we were expected to visit our native village; upon which they formed a troupe of their most celebrated musicians to do us honour.

Their orchestra soon established itself in an oak-wood, close by. Some barrels were set on end and covered with planks to serve for a table; round which was an elevation consisting of piles of hay. One pile, however, specially composed in order to serve as a seat of honour, was made up of such a wonderful collection as to form a pastoral throne fit for Titania.

The humming of bees, attracted by the odour of the recent hay-making; the noises of the cricket and grasshopper in the neighbouring fields; the whizzing of wasp and dragon-fly, and many other such sounds, including the monotonous buzz of the crowd of insects disturbed by the cutting of the grass, which, until now, had sheltered them, formed together such a symphonic harmony as to suggest the kind of ethereal music which Berlioz must have had in mind whilst writing his "Danse des Sylphes."

Darkness came on, but no one was yet tired; so, in order to relieve the obscurity, they started about a dozen barrels of pitch round our glade. The flames mounted perpendicularly upwards, like cylinders of red fire, on account of there being no wind; a further effect of which was to render the air very heavy, for, in addition to the heat of the day, there were the many perfumes of cut flowers.

The torches were placed in such order that, in closing the eyes, one might have taken them to be so many pillars of fire sustaining the roof of the temple. The waving clouds of smoke seemed like a moving canopy; sometimes veiling and sometimes revealing the groups of stars. The darkness round our aerial edifice encircled us like walls; from which objects were emerging, imperfectly outlined.

The children in gambolling were like so many over-sized gnomes; and, altogether, the scene was acquiring a fantastic incoherent appearance. Add to this the effect of the women starting out from some corner, darker than the mouth of Erebus, with eyes of living coal, and an uncanny smile, to ask to tell your fortune.

We call this telling "la bonne aventure," or otherwise "good fortune"; and, for our part, as far as this particular day was concerned, we found the epithet quite justified.

5.—A farewell Gipsy concert.

Next day, the men of the company would not hear of an immediate separation; making it a point of honour to accompany us as far as the next village—some riding and some running. Many of them occupied long narrow carts, each of which contained about twenty persons standing upright. A

heavy rain had succeeded the previous day and its night-storm; but our Bohemian escort started quite alert, rather enjoying the rainfall than otherwise, whilst many of them paraded in their sheep-skin pelisses, the wool of which they were careful to wear outside. This made them look like so many bears mounted on wild horses; for the spurs were kept so much in play that these creatures were giving startling jumps at every moment. The drivers were going at full speed, causing the old iron work of their carts to set up an unearthly clatter. This, added to the neighing of the horses and cracking of the whips, would have created a perfect chaos of sound, even without the occasional collisions with stones in the highway. Each time this happened the shrieks, the shouts of laughter and general devilment went on improving; presenting samples of almost every perception of which our sense of hearing is capable.

One could see that the moment was drawing near when there would be no possibility of restraining this race; which nothing can ever succeed in bringing to reason. The refreshing influence of the atmosphere, tempered by a fine penetrating rain, allowed of our proceeding, however, without any further extravagant episode. The vociferations as they went along were a mere sign of festivity; though they sufficed to scare every two-footed or four-footed beast for some distance.

At last, we reached the little inn which was to be our halting-place; the scene alike of our parting and of our final aubade. There, we went into a large shed, where everybody shared the pretence that it did not rain; and the horsemen (who were really the musical aristocracy of the company notwithstanding the general equality otherwise) began to dispose themselves for a musical feast.

Having uncased the instruments and placed themselves in a semi-circle, the symphony began; *con estro poetico*. But the brandy which circulated, and the wine which had already circulated since the day before, soon brought about a *rinforzando con rabbia*. In a few moments came the distant roll of thunder, sounding like a deep organ-point, whilst the timber work of the roof, being very high, and the dilapidated walls of very thin wood, we had the full benefit of an echo which gave us every note again producing the most chaotic confusion. The passionate passages, the ornamentations, the virtuosity and all feats of technique continued, however, un-

affected; all being rolled up together in one formidable *tutti*. The roar went on increasing; being varied occasionally by sounds more acute and piercing, as well as by the lightning which came at short intervals to enliven the scene. Sometimes the latter threw a pale greenish light and sometimes a transparent brilliancy of roseate tint, enveloping the performers in an apotheosis like Bengal fire shows up the demi-gods at a theatre.

During the tempestuous *finale* of this performance it was as if every possible sound or tone was crushing down together like mountain crests which fall with a frightful uproar in sheets of sand mixed with blocks of rock and stone. We felt uncertain whether the edifice, which seemed to rock with these sudden displacements of sonorous currents and vibrations, would not really fall upon our heads; such was the crushing nature of the instrumentation of this concerto which all the conservatoires of the world would certainly have condemned and even we found to be just a trifle risky.

CHAPTER XIII.

With Josy the Bohemian.

1.—We make his acquaintance.

AFTER having applied ourselves with passion to the desire to enter fully into every quality of Bohemian art; by listening to its best virtuoses and most gifted interpreters, and by comparing its innumerable manifestations, various in form according to circumstances but in constant agreement as regards nature of the inspiration ——

After having assimilated this art by seeking to reproduce its most beautiful and striking inspirations within the domain of grand art and of the great European world, upon an instrument which simulates the orchestra (favourably betimes when a single thought happens to require expression)——

After having endeavoured to re-unite and co-ordinate the dispersed fragments of a musical idiom at once odd and sublime, and to devote to this luxurious plant a more fertile soil by naturalising it upon that of our common art ——

After all this, we put to ourselves the question whether we could not endow the Bohemian artist with the advantages which study would add to his inspiration—so dazzling in its first gush?

Having witnessed the Bohemian type as an effective new introduction in romance and a powerful resource in drama; having also perceived that Bohemian sentiment was becoming distilled throughout the greater portion of those who represent the forward literary movement of our day, we thought that,

by cultivating one of these exotic beings within the circle of influence of our societies, we should, as far as could be foreseen, enable him to attain to a most remarkable expansion of genius. We were in hopes that the graft of reflexion upon one of these young plants might soften the bitterness of its sap; and perfume with a more delicate aroma the savour of its fruits. We took pleasure in thinking that, by keeping up friendly relations, we should surely finish by conquering the levity inherent to these untamable characters, who, until now, had been impervious to all civilising and Christianising influences.

In Paris, at a time when we were certainly not thinking of all the Bohemians we had met, seen, heard, known or dreamed of, it happened that, one morning, Count Sandor Teleky paid us a visit; bringing with him a boy of about twelve years, wearing a hussar vest, trousers trimmed with lace of every colour, and having a swarthy complexion. His look was bold and the general expression of his countenance arrogant; and certainly betokening no desire for any acquaintance. He was carrying a violin; and the Count, pushing him towards us, said:

"Look! I have brought you a present."

Great was the astonishment of those who, happening to be with us at the time, were witnesses of this strange episode—strange indeed if viewed from the point of view of French manners; Thalberg, among others, being very persistent in enquiring what we thought of trying to do with such a keepsake.

Our own surprise was scarcely any less. It is true that, in Hungary, we had often expressed the wish to find a young Bohemian, gifted with talent for the violin and still susceptible of being taught; but that was so long before this occurrence that we had entirely ceased thinking of the matter. Still, at the sight of this youngster, small and slim, nervous and precocious, but surly and insolent already, it was easy enough to recognise that he was a young Hungarian Gipsy brought to us in satisfaction of our ancient desire.

As a matter of fact, the Count, in leaving the country at about the same time with ourselves, had given orders to his people to the effect that if, at any time, the opportunity should arise of obtaining a promising youngster, fulfilling what we had often vainly sought for, he was to be sent straight to Paris.

It was not long before this roguish little fellow was discovered on the Count's lands and sent to him, after having been bought from his parents; and now the Count had come with him as a present from friend to friend.

2.—He becomes slightly too original.

We kept the child with us for a while, taking pleasure in satisfying our curiosity by following the exuberance of his humours and instincts amidst surroundings so entirely new to him. His entire young nature was dominated by pride, which showed itself at every instant and in all forms; and by many childish vanities.

To steal whatever pleased his palate, to want to embrace all the girls, and to break any object of which he did not understand the mechanism, were defects somewhat inconvenient; however natural. We were inclined to treat them as rather of a nature to cure themselves; but this did not prove to be at all easy, for, when complained of, they merely took less spontaneous forms.

The result of this peculiar demeanour was that Josy soon became a little lion among the circle of our acquaintances; whose purses did ample honour to what we must regard as his private concerts. And, finding himself in this way well supplied with money, he started at once to spend it with a superb indifference and an easy manner—both of the highest quality.

What he took most interest in was the elegance of his person. His coquetry was quite incredible; extending to affectation and dandyism. Canes, beautiful pins and watch-chains were essentials; whilst cravats and vests never seemed to him sufficiently lively in colours. No hairdresser was too good to curl his locks and beautify him; to make himself an Adonis was his greatest object.

In spite of all these joys, however, one thing intervened to spoil his pleasure; and that was to see his skin so brown and yellow in comparison with the faces he saw around him. But the happy thought occurred to him that, if he made a sufficiently frequent use of the soap employed by those who possessed this advantage over him in colour, he would be able to remove this defect.

So Josy purchased soap, and then soap, and after that still more soap. But not only soap; for he was always visiting the most fashionable shops, asking for whatever took his fancy as likely to suit him and depositing his five-franc pieces on the counter; far too great a lord ever to wait for change.

3.—The racial character asserts itself.

It soon became impossible to exercise the slightest control over him, he had so established his reputation among all our friends as—"the dandy artist." Being moreover on the point of leaving for Spain, we confided the duty of supervising him to Mons. Massart, violin-professor at the Conservatoire, who promised to devote the most serious care to the development of his musical talents, which were astonishing; whilst the manager of the boarding house where he was placed undertook to cultivate (as he described it) his "mind and heart."

We had not been very long away before the news we received began more and more to convince us that the fears we had already entertained of the entire failure of the plan of adoption were but too well founded. Music was the only subject upon which it was possible to occupy him seriously; or for which it was even possible to obtain any real attention at all.

Filled with an insurmountable disdain for everything he did not understand, he was evidently convinced inwardly (though he dared not avow it) that he was superior to all his surroundings. He had no taste for anything whatever; and, like a real savage, cared for nothing and attached no importance to anything whatever—*his* pleasures, *his* violin, and *his* music, of course, excepted.

At the time of Count Teleky presenting him to us, dressed in his Magyar-gipsy costume, he had only a primitive sort of violin. Rudely constructed and having strings more suited to hanging people than pleasing them, it nevertheless served him to execute the most dashing Frischkas with marvellous precision and unfailing verve. He had no lack of facility, being always ready to play; and would pass hours at scraping either from memory or in improvisation; sometimes also introducing (though evidently unwillingly) themes which he had become

familiar with while staying with us. These, for the most part, seemed to him insipid and unpleasant; but notwithstanding that, he had somehow taken a fancy for an air which he had heard us play, and with which he would sometimes regale his audience. But in doing so he decked it out so completely in his own way, and ultimately made of it something so exquisitely comical that it never failed to elicit peals of laughter.

At the commencement of his studies he proved to be so thoroughly unteachable that, according to the professors who had him in hand, the worst and most wilful faults of the most disobedient children they had ever had were slight in comparison. Nothing could ever convince him that what he did was not far better than what he was being taught; nor could he be persuaded that he was not being made the victim of a barbarous violence when any stage was reached which put a stop to all further protest.

It was not long before we received formal information to the effect that Josy, though growing up, was not changing in the least; that he made absolutely no progress, and that—in short—there was no means of doing anything with him.

Disinclined to decide too quickly, and being, for our part, somewhat inclined in his favour, we considered the letters he had sent us (written in zig-zag style and strongly savouring of oriental exaggerations) as some proof of application. Thus, wishing to meet him as soon as possible for the purpose of an understanding, we arranged to join him at Strasburg station.

Now it so happened that, just at the identical moment of alighting at the station, our mind was otherwise occupied; so that for the instant it was not present to it that, having arranged to meet him there, we should be on the look-out for him. Therefore, when we were quite suddenly seized and nearly choked by the embraces of some unknown person, it took us a little while before we could realise matters and recognise, in the tall handsome young man before us, dressed in high Parisian style, the wild little gipsy boy of the steppes.

He, however, it was. There were the curved nose and Asiatic eyes. There also was the dark skin—that skin which had evidently proved too much for all the French cosmetics of which we have already heard. And not only all these were the same; but so also, as it soon appeared, was his manner of thinking; for, in response to our natural exclamation of surprise:

"Well! there you are, quite the gentleman now!" he replied without the slightest confusion and in the real hidalgo style:

"That's because I am one!"

His new clothes had not affected his pompous talk and grand gesticulation, and it soon became difficult to deceive ourselves any longer as to the impossibility of retaining this incomprehensible nature within the limits of social life and regulated course of existence.

4.—We part with Josy.

But it is well known that, whoever once deeply desires success, loses the hope of it but very slowly. It was in this lingering way that we now formed the idea that, perhaps, in some spot nearer the woods and fields, it would be easier to have some influence with him. We therefore placed him in Germany on the borders of the Black Forest with Mons. Stern, an excellent musician, at that time employed by His Highness the Prince of Hohenzollern at Löwenberg.

As it would have been impossible for him to have been placed in better hands or in a more salutary and promising situation, we felt encouraged to base some hope of the result of his stay there, as a sort of last resource. It had the advantage of placing him in the presence of nature; of removing him from the temptations of a great city; and consequently from the danger of adding new corruptions to his present not too virtuous inclinations.

Some time after that we were in Vienna; and there heard of a new band of Gipsy musicians who had just arrived. Desiring to know whether they were worth the trouble of cultivating, we went one day with a few friends to the inn called "The Siskin"; and, considering that none of us had the faintest idea of finding amongst them anyone we knew, we were considerably astonished at the agitated movement which spread amongst them the moment we entered.

All at once a strapping young fellow detached himself from the group, and came and precipitated himself at our knees, which he embraced in the most passionate fashion. He had no sooner done so than the whole troupe surrounded us; and,

without any preamble, overwhelmed us with hand-kissing, thanks and endless effusions of gratitude, the reason for all of which was to us a complete mystery.

It was only after some trouble that we succeeded in unravelling the fact that the young fellow who had first thrown himself at our feet, crying:

"Éljen, Éljen, Liszt Ferencz,"

was Josy's elder brother, who had obtained information about what had been going on, and felt himself so touched by the care we had taken of his poor sold little child-brother that he could not help sobbing aloud as he enumerated our kindnesses one by one.

This lively emotion, however, did not prevent him from soon alluding (though with some diffidence) to his desire to see, and also to have, his brother again. So, having no reason to be satisfied with the news we had received from Josy's new professor, and giving up all hope of ever being able to make out of him an artist after our own conceptions, as well as considering it wrong to attack an organisation which evidently could not endure the temperature of our societies, we became somewhat thoughtful.

The case resolved itself into a question of conscience. Whether, even should we succeed in coercing the rebellious will, it was in our power to promise that the so-called Christian European world could really give him something better than the exquisite joys of nature and liberty which, by that time, it would have completely robbed him of all future power of enjoying.

As there could be only one answer to that problem, we arranged for him to come to Vienna; in order that he might rejoin his friends, should he so desire. On seeing them his ravishment seemed so boundless that he appeared literally mad with joy. Although his vanity may have once caused him to wish for a complexion different from that of his race, his present demeanour made it quite clear that it was not upon the race itself that he had any idea of turning his back.

No sooner had he joined the band than the whole company disappeared; having quitted the town in order to exhibit the lost child to the father of the tribe. At his return Josy was even more intolerable than ever; finishing up by asking us (to

the accompaniment of noisy demonstrations of gratitude) the permission to return to his horde at once and for ever.

And thus it was that we separated; though even then not before his purse had been once again filled (and drawn upon for an orgy on a large scale for the band) and he had been regaled by a parting fête.

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We never knew afterwards what became of this intractable scholar; and often wonder whether we shall meet him again some day at the corner of a far-off wood, violin in hand, smoking or sleeping.

5.—After many days.

Since appearance of the French edition of this work an answer has been received to the above question, causing us equal surprise and pleasure. It came from no less a person than Josy himself; whose letter, together with our reply to it, we have now the satisfaction to lay before our readers.

Debrezin, Dec. 30, 1859.

Honoured Sir,

I have just read in the local Sunday-paper of the 25th of this month an extract from your diary, under the title "Jozsi the Gipsy"; in course of which you so correctly describe your experience of me thirteen years ago, that, as a consequence, I permit myself the honour of writing to you this letter.

As I am now married and father of a family, in possession of a calmer mood and proper manly understanding, I look back with regret to think that in my youth whilst under your honour's protection, and introduced into the great world in order to be educated in art, I made this impossible through my incorrigible bad conduct and strange demeanour towards everything noble, sublime and artistic: and find that on my own and my brother's request I was rightly served in being sent back to my people as a bad Gipsy-boy not possible to be trained.

Now I see that what I did was (to put it short) to bury my future. But now that cannot be altered.

Still, as you, according to the conclusion of what you say in your diary, would like to hear something more about me, I seize the opportunity; and therefore inform you most respectfully that here in Debrezin, my home, I am serving as an ordinary Zigeuner in the band; respected both by my companions and the public, because I still play my violin pretty well.

Moreover, about three years ago I married a local Gipsy girl; and, last year, had a son born whom I had baptised under your honoured name of Franz; and I also took the liberty of choosing your honour as

godfather, and at the christening we all, in the most cordial manner and with uplifted glasses, greeted the godfather who was far away.

I wish your honour, for the forthcoming new year, much happiness and a long life and health; your treasured memory is stamped upon my heart, and your portrait which I brought with me from Paris is kept in my little household and will be a sacred relic for those who follow me. Remaining with deepest respect

Your honour's most humble servant,

Sáraí Jósef,
or the Gipsy Jozsi,
in the first music band of Boka Károly.

(Reply.)

To Sáraí Josef,
Debrezin in Ungaru.

Dear Jozsy,

It is very seldom that a letter has so agreeably surprised and afforded me so much pleasure as yours. I send you my best thanks for it, meantime, as I intend to take an opportunity of visiting you at your home at Debrezin.

I could almost envy you for having escaped from the civilised art of music-making, with its limitations and crampings. You Gipsies have at all events fresh and direct enjoyment in life and your performance of music free and hot like the flow of your blood.

No prattle and jargon from pedants, cavillers, critics and all the nameless brood of such can reach you; with your fiddle-bow you raise yourself above everything miserable in the world and play it defiantly away.

Yes, my dear Jozsy, you have well done, not to engage in concert-room torture, and to disdain the empty, painful reputation of a *thorough* violinist. As a Gipsy you remain lord of yourself, and are not reduced (as is the case now with civilised artists) to ask other people for excuse and even for forgiveness when you are only doing right.

Greet your wife on my behalf and let it be your great care to make her happy. It was very cordial on your part that you should have chosen me as godfather for your child. I shall keep little Frankie well in mind and shortly send him a little violin to play with, by Remenji (an excellent and splendid Zigeuner *in partibus*) who expects to be playing at a concert in Pesth towards the end of this month. Your youngster must start at once moving about on it so that the fingering may become fluent with him very early.

Remember me to your master Boka, whose nearer acquaintance would be a great pleasure to me, and be assured, dear Jozy, that I always remain your well-wisher and friend,

F. Liszt.

Weimar.
Jan. 14, 1860.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Gipsy Women of Moscow

1.—The voices of Gipsy women.

WITH the exception of certain ballad fragments and a few strains of somewhat martial song, we have failed to discover amongst the Bohemians of Hungary any indication of a vocal music worthy of fixing our attention. Few of the women there have beautiful voices. Too exposed to atmospheric changes, too accustomed to strong drinks, too soon fatigued by their extravagant dances and the cries with which they intersperse them; too exhausted by the weight of their children (which they often carry on their back for the entire day, like the savages of America) the freshness in quality of their voices disappears rapidly, and is succeeded by loss of voice before their youth can be said to have entirely passed. The diphthong-habit incidental to the use of their language also contributes to their tone of voice; and its guttural, nearly disagreeable, character.

2.—Their instrumental music.

No one has ever been able to say from what part of the world, or for what reason, the women of Gipsy race, who for so many years have produced a sensation in Moscow (a sensation which even now has not completely subsided), originally came to that city; or in what manner they were recruited. Of

the sensation, however, there can be no question; for no one can have been for any time at Moscow without being aware of it, or can have escaped knowing something about these fascinating Bohemians.

There has been much said about the voluptuous charm and beauty of Indian dancers and improvisors; yet, when some of these came to Paris, no one at the conclusion of their visit seemed aware of any particular excitement. It would not be possible, however, for the Gipsy magicians to leave Moscow in this way. They have acquired a niche in the archives of the first families of the Empire; one red or black, according to whether it stands for unequalled pleasures or irreparable loss. They have made themselves the terror of mothers and guardians; and the latter have many a frightful story to tell of a prince who, in a few summers, has been lured by them to devour in festivities and promiscuous delights his fortune of millions; or of a count who has committed suicide in despair at not being able to compete with his rival; or, it may be, of a young lord who, in their company, has become disgusted with life and all its concerns.

Some aspirants who are not so young or strong occasionally find a kind of inane delight in merely gazing at them; but who could count or estimate the far greater number of humbler victims—those less brilliant or illustrious? The number, however, is easy to realise if once one happens to see these magicians; for they are undoubtedly beautiful indeed; and their songs are capable of carrying a mental enchantment to brains which would never be tempted even by the most seductive gesture.

Sceptical as we are about the real value of the majority of artistic productions which find favour with the fashionable world, we were not personally so greatly enchanted by these ladies. We may admit, however, that the evenings passed in listening to them were decidedly not so indolent as those spent in elegant saloons listening to the cooing of a romance by some budding talent. We could also easily imagine (without sharing them) the fascinations to which those were subject who struggled so hard to attract the fire-drops distilled by those jet-like glances. And it was certainly natural for those to be haunted by dreams of houris who had encountered the bewildering suppleness of forms whose movements, whether of

yielding or resisting, seemed actuated by some extremely delicate motive power; and easy to imagine the feelings of those who had borne the disdainful teasings of the little feet, first out and then withdrawn, first giving and then refusing—a coquetry at once both refined and savage.

On the whole, we found them, as regards music, below their reputation, and certainly inferior in their own style to the Hungarian virtuosi in theirs; notwithstanding that, in the general view, the latter enjoy only a secondary reputation.

The Moscow troupe has only a few men; who remain in the background, with the exception of the leader, who not only directs but teaches every one their part. This frequently has to be taught note by note to the female department; in which deficiencies of memory have frequently to be cured by a system of rod and fasting, apparently effective.

The director we knew had an extremely pronounced sense of rhythm, which he accentuated in truly national style. In musical declamation also he possessed the natural emphasis of his race. But his orchestra was a decidedly poor affair; containing neither violin nor cembalo, and evidently only serving to accompany and guide the voices.

Arranged in front were the prettiest girls, full of enchanting attractions as so many Armidas; tyrannical fairies from whom it was difficult to escape; the effect of their beauty being increased by old women of characteristic ugliness, properly arranged for contrast.

3.—Their vocal music.

The Gipsy women of Moscow often sing in Russian; having appropriated some melodies of that country for the purpose. One of their best performances at the time of which we are speaking was the romance of the "Scythe." Another one, still better known, was the "Goosekeeper"; and all of them finished with a refrain repeated in chorus.

We quote here a few couplets for the purpose of indicating their sentiment, which is a curious mixture of pastoral colour with Bohemian bitterness.

THE SCYTHE.

I am going to reap the roads not far from her,
Oh! my well-sharpened scythe, be not afraid,
I shall find you soft grass to cut.
Fall not in love, poor heart. You will shed drops of bitterness
Like my scythe sheds the moisture of the grass.

Pretty girls are changeable. Their promises are
Like the larks which salute the spring,
And are away.
etc., etc.

THE GOOSEKEEPER.

One evening the pretty girl comes back
With her geese. The girl with black eyes and
Rosy cheeks sang thus to her geese,
Tega, Tega, Tega.

Do not seek me; you whom I do not love,
You do not please my soul. What are to me
Pavilions of silk. With my beloved I find a
Paradise under a tent of rags.
Tega, Tega Tega.

With him there is love enough to be
Happy for all eternity, but the heart
Revolts at weeping under golden brocade.
Tega, Tega. Tega.

In other songs verses are to be met with full of grace and freshness, and giving evidence of a sentiment of some intensity; as for example:

With her the sun seems more radiant
And the earth greener. Autumn changes
Into May and the desert into a haven
Of delight.

4.—Description of an orgy.

These Romances begin with such a soothing effect, that to listen to their long opening notes one might imagine being gently swayed in a hammock. It is only at the second or third refrain that the chorus begins to take it up with real zest. By that time the guests are practically all assembled, the punch is ignited, the first chill of the gathering is passed.

The bluish flame contrasts with the blaze of the lamps suspended from the ceiling and with the starlight of the many candles placed upon tables and brackets; but the lamps and candles go out one by one until the scene is reduced for its illumination to the uncertain glow from the great log-fires.

The men generally drink in silence until the perfume of the ananas and the citron has created a desire on the part of the women; but it is only after the latter have partaken that the orgy fairly starts its noisy round.

Dancing then begins again, and it need scarcely be said with far greater freedom of movement. The old women, who had timidly held back at the first start, join in; as soon as the long evening, the music, the sight of the dancing, and the taste of the rum, have excited them up to the necessary degree. But, that being accomplished, they become more energetic and demonstrative than the young ones, and render the scene comparable only to a *buffera inferna.* There is no longer any restraint, the rhythms become more pressing and the chorus especially surprises by taking a higher intonation and introducing various changes of an almost alarming character. In the meantime the dancers continue in a style altogether in keeping with the increased noise.

The turnings and wheelings continue increasing in rapidity until they reach a pitch of utter giddiness, and the dancers are obliged to form of themselves a compact group in order to be able to stand. The little breath they have left is then employed for a final whirl; which soon brings them, exhausted, senseless and breathless, to the ground; all falling together as a tremendous lifeless mass.

At this moment listeners and spectators are as much excited as the dancers and singers themselves; and it becomes conceivable to the onlooker why, for the sake of experiencing such voluptuous sensations, inheritances are devoured.

In these saloons, sparkling with a truly Parisian splendour rendered even more luxurious by the ostentation of the Russian boyars, reclining on luxurious couches beneath girandoles with a hundred arms of cut crystal, and treading the most costly carpets which Persia could produce, everything seemed to us entirely misplaced, reversed, forced and artificial.

In presence of these rarities of gastronomy, served up on the most costly vessels and set off by delicious wines, surrounded by the choicest hot-house plants timed to bloom there

before our gaze, we felt how completely it was all against nature; and that we might look long in vain for the real Bohemian impressions, experienced in the far-off forests bordered by the Damitz or the Theiss.

5.—Lessons of the same.

One would scarcely be able to say that in what has been just described there was gross indecency, such as may easily be met with in other places; or any revolting obscenity, such as practised by dancers whom the police have occasion now and then to control. These Bohemian women differ from mere harlots, as their appeal to sensuality is more poetical, and there is nothing to associate them with the usual effronteries of such a life. They seem, on the contrary, content to address the senses through the imagination, by the sole effect of their intoxicating personality.

That superiority of disdain and indifference which is proper to the Gipsy race, and which seems like a haughty disinterestedness is always with them; so that in yielding themselves they give nothing. It is this very disdain which stimulates the fancy and inflames the passion of their adorers, used as they are to enervation and insipidity. Being uncultivated makes no difference, as these women have within themselves an element which, to the eyes of love, lightens up the unknown with many tints, and keeps the inexplicable vacillating as if under the influence of a subterranean flame. It also serves as an infallible stimulant to less vigorous intelligences; and to those luxurious idlers who do not seem to be able to find any more masculine way of reaching their destiny than that of falling seriously in love with a woman whose race renders her quite incapable of treating love for a Giorgio seriously. She might even marry him; for such things have happened. In that case she would only laugh, as soon as she got among her own people, at the stupidity of the man to give her a position she did not want and has no respect for; just as if she could ever be anything different from what she is.

But this *Bohemian sentiment*, which clings so pertinaciously to the character of these women, cannot be said to be any longer expressed more than feebly in their music; which has

become largely degenerate through continual contact with European art.

It still retains, however, sufficient real originality in rhythm —sufficient trace of that furious energy which specialises it— as well as sufficient novelty in modulation to give it an inimitable charm. In questions of art we do not get beyond the approximate, our senses are too primitive in their subjective impressions to judge objectively of tonalities expressive of more profound emotions, without giving way in the presence of such a musical phantasmagoria.

CHAPTER XV.

Gipsy Women Elsewhere.

1.—Kiow, the city of universal welcome.

THE Byzantine city of Kiow, situated upon a hill, seems like a woman reclining upon soft cushions looking down into the calm waters of the Dnieper, which spreads out its capacious mirror at her feet as if tempting her to bestow upon it her idle glances; and is perhaps of all towns the most capable of supplying a picturesque background for errant apparitions of the Bohemians.

To understand why this is so it is necessary to picture in thought the low inflated cupolas of St. Sophia, with their prairie-green surface besprinkled with stars, as if a constellation had descended upon green fields surmounted by a golden resplendent sun-globe.

To picture in remembrance the variously-sized domes which symmetrically cross one another on the roofs of the Laura Cathedral like a flower-bed of gigantic gems—and to have in mind the multitude of belfries and turrets, capped with the Byzantine hood and rising like poppy-heads over the three hundred churches of the holy city, the ancient metropolis of the Russian Church—one might imagine the monks of the single Greek order of St. Basil to be here in complete possession; for at every step they are to be encountered with their joined hands and large-bead rosaries, their cunning, penetrating look, and their ample black tunics with extra-wide sleeves.

But to realise completely why Kiow should seem like a home for every race we must also recall in imagination the long

rows of pilgrims, men, women and children, crowding round the porches—either of St. Barbe (whose relics are also visited by Catholics, the saint having lived before the schism), or of the Laura, where thousands of venerated skeletons are to be seen covered with precious stuffs, long since dirty through being devoutly touched by the pilgrims; or at the entrance of the famous catacombs which, they tell us, extend under the bed of the Dnieper and have their exit at the opposite bank; or, lastly, at St. André, a graceful little edifice, quite a jewel of renaissance architecture, perched upon a high rock; like an eagle trying to look through the waves of the great river, in the hope of finding the treasures which, according to a Cossack tradition, are concealed in its bed.

These thousands of pilgrims are all bare-footed; and, staff in hand, look much impoverished by scrupulous observance of fasts during the long pedestrian journey. Happy to contemplate the beatitudes, too, though often reduced to unconsciousness by the fatigue, as well as by the odour of *binjoin*; a kind of incense used exclusively and abundantly in the Greek Church.

But, in order to picture the universal welcome extended by Kiow to all races, we must also hear in imagination the sound of its church-bells; which seem of some special metal, for they spread over the city harmonious waves, seeming like musical fabric, the folds of which are furled and unfurled as a signal to come to prayer. We must also recall the aspect of those streets where the houses alternate with groups of trees, revealing to the astonished traveller at one time an elegant construction and at another a miserable shanty like those of Constantinople, made of a few planks smeared with grey colour and covered with wooden roof at about a man's height.

This feature of contrast in dwellings reminds us also of the poplar trees; which at one time form a curtain to divide one quarter from another like a palisade, and at another serve to ornament the open places like so many obelisks. Then again there are the little Czerkess shops; where the fashionable men like to linger, with their Ispahan pointed caps, their striped yellow silk vests, and their cashmere girdles, within which there always nestles a little crescent-shaped dagger. There are also the Russian merchants of the lower part of the city called Podol; dressed in their long caftans of blue cloth,

with their gravely courteous and cheerfully good-natured faces, framed in by their symmetrically cut hair and capacious beards.

The grand shops reminiscent of St. Petersburg, where you can select your latest Paris mode, or London novel, or Vienna waltz, also contribute to complete this odd collection of heterogeneous things; of rich and confused elements from East and West, this mixture of Grecian habits and far-off reminders of the decadent Roman Empire; with French and English importations constantly visible publicly, in dress and equipages, as also in the *salons* and boudoirs of high society.

This would-be greatness so faded and affected, so diffuse and solemn, of a town having a great historic past with traditions of war, conquest, religion and wealth—this tacit appeal of a town with its Golden Gate; on which the Polish King once broke his sword before entering there as conqueror, is like the thoughts of former glory of some fallen queen.

But, though the magnificence of Kiow may be said to be entirely of the past, it still has undoubtedly many charms. It has its admirable site, its exquisite vegetation and a climate which the learned call extreme; because, after the rigid beauty of the northern winter is passed, it offers us the adorable transparencies of a southern atmosphere.

This is the city of universal welcome. Its violent contrasts are surrounded by a Nature both opulent and bare. Its people are equally savage, ignorant and superstitious; besides being full of pent-up grief, latent energy, and always ready to revolt. But, in spite of all, and, as we have already said, it is of all cities the one where the people of any race from wheresoever they may come can never appear to its inhabitants as strange.

2.—The Gipsy Camp at Kiow.

Kiow, the religious capital of Russia, was the scene of the baptism of its first sovereigns; which took place in the sacred waters of its wide river. Everything so combines to render it unlike any other city that the frequent encounter of Bohemians there can cause no surprise. They are constantly to be seen walking about familiarly and carelessly, offering

amulets and asking for kopecks from whomsoever they choose. There is no particular time of year for them to disappear, as they no more fear the icy cold than the torrid heat.

But, if Kiow is always full of Gipsies, it must be remembered that this is only in the day-time; for they are forbidden to remain in the city at night. In pursuance of this regulation they retire towards evening to a situation not far from the town. There they possess a camp of rather considerable size, which has been permanently fixed; as one horde quits it only to make room for another. Its location is so eminently picturesque that one might easily imagine it to have been purposely selected in order to give a striking and romantic effect to their triangular tents (Szatra) as well as to their fires, which are to be seen from afar in the twilight.

It is strange that Gipsy groups when observed are always so well posed that a painter would only have to transfer them to his canvas as they are. The only explanation of this is that the artistic instinct of this vagabond race is so strange that, though at one time there may be an inclination to consider them abject, they frequently give reason for the contrary view; causing us to wonder whether they are not rather specially favoured by nature. They seem, as it were, supernaturally condemned to hide their nobility under a form of rags, whether from the effect of enchantments such as those of Circe, or of some malediction like that of Noah.

The Bohemian camp at Kiow is an object of interest for elegant promenaders; but visitors to it are not importuned for alms, as the Zigani are quite accustomed to the circumstances. They generally have an indifferent manner; sometimes greeting those who pass by with a proudly affected smile, sometimes trying to attract compassion for one who has been injured or for an invalid. The greater part, however, allow visitors to pass by without even remarking their presence. The most which is likely to happen is that a child which is too young to go far away may ask for some help; or some woman may perceive the fond glances of a couple in love; in which case she will be rapidly at the side of the carriage with a prediction of good-luck. The general idea is that what she has to say is conventional; but it is not always so. The first words may possibly be only a formula; but, as soon as the young lady has taken off her glove and presented her palm, the Gipsy, whether young or old, will always tell her what she sees. The

most she will do by way of consolation for any prediction of evil will be to preface its expression by some exclamation such as

"Holy Virgin! have pity on us," or—

"Holy Virgin! guard us in the evil day."

The account has been long remembered of a beautiful young gipsy being asked by a young millionaire what kind of death was in store for him.

"Ah! poor youth," she replied, sighing heavily,

"How greatly you will suffer; for it is of starvation you will die."

Everyone present laughed at a prediction which seemed so utterly unlikely to be fulfilled. This treatment was quite satisfactory to the prophetess, who not unusually had to encounter violence after predicting misfortune.

Thirty years after, remembrance of the circumstance was revived by news that the rich man had died; having been literally starved to death, as the result of a malady by which he had been attacked.

Some individuals of this mysterious race are nearly always to be met on the wild and solitary banks of the great river—the Dnieper. They seem to have an unaccountable preference for the opposite bank; which, sandy and flat, forms a great contrast to the rich and variegated vegetation of the hill on the other side, called the Petczersk; from the top of which the upper or noble part of the city extends.

This more select district is the quarter favoured by the authorities, as well as by families who are resident at Kiow during the entire year. At this high level there is a large and beautiful public garden; but the slope descending to the river is left uncultivated and presents many irregularities and some wild orchards, among which the fishermen build their summer huts.

The legend has it that the *Rusalki* (sirens) speak to any young men who risk living there alone about the glorious time when the Cossacks embarked at that very spot. That was when they seized Constantinople by a sudden stroke; when the name of the great Mazeppa was spread all over Europe; when Wernyhora, the Nostradamus of the Ukraine, lived; whose predictions still circulate, teaching her race to know no submission. The young man who braves the love of a *Rusalka*

is told many other secrets; some of hatred against the lords whispered quite softly; although he knows that a *Rusalka* always imparts a disgust for all women to whomsoever she kisses.

There, on one of the hillocks, one often happens to meet a Gipsy man or woman, partly hidden by a hollow in the rock, or by a cluster of bushes; crouched upon the ground, the chin resting upon their knees, which are held in their clasped hands. In this motionless attitude they remain contemplating in dreamy sadness the opposite bank of the Dnieper, the yellow desolate shore of the government of Tchernigoff.

Why?

3.—A Village Festival with Gipsy incidents.

Once, in Podolia, a fête was offered to us which took place in the woods. There we came across several Bohemians whose exterior strongly reminded us of those we had seen in Hungary. It was in the month of October, the sun-rays having still some force and spreading a slight sensation of warmth.

A great banquet had been prepared for some hundreds of peasants; gathered together from various surrounding villages, all belonging to the same landlord; who had selected this day for the purpose of making good to them a year's taxes. The occasion being so suitable for dancing the young folks gave us the Cosaque in a way which reminded us forcibly of Hungarian dances. The orchestra was set up under the branches of an enormous oak-tree, upon waggons, the oxen belonging to which were in the meantime at pasture.

Two *szlachcice* (of the noble class) were scraping the violin between two Gipsies and a blind peasant from the Ukraine. During the intervals of the dance the peasant started intoning, to the accompaniment of his *lira* (a kind of hurdy-gurdy), a ballad in honour of St. Nicholas and a hymn to the Virgin; which, by the nasal tone in which they were given, as well as by the monotony of their forlorn sentiment, were sad enough to break the heart of a stone.

The two gipsies who completed the group had, the one a pair of drums, and the other a *balalaika*—replacing the *cem-*

balo used in Hungary. Their dance-tunes (to which they gave the name of *szumki* or *tropaki*) were of square simple rhythm, and of lively character. The scene of the proceedings was surrounded by the remains of fortifications dating from the war of Chmielnicki; the arrogant Ataman of the Cossacks who seemed to make it his business to rock the balance of power between Poland and Russia just as he pleased, by the capricious imposition of his own weight.

On that day we met one of the most beautiful Gipsy women possible to imagine. The deep carnation softly spreading over her yellow face of slight mahogany tint; her languishing glance; the wavy locks partly hiding her neck as if they were a black plumage; and the poetic energy she threw into the metaphors employed for her horoscopes all combined to fix her indelibly in our memory. She was known by the name of Ariffina, and was of grave or even severe expression; with a smile seeming to betoken inconsolable grief. When silent her lips would fold with a painful contraction, she would draw herself up tall and formidable, and her look would fall cold like that of a serpent erect. At other times she would listen with a pretence of simplicity which was full of grace. Her head would pose in a way half-disdainful and half-sympathetic; and, whilst still listening to the questions put to her, her glances would wander hither and thither as if attracted by the sight of spirits in the air. The red handkerchief passed round her head would have befitted an ancient priestess, as also would the white bodice loosely covering her breast and the brown *burka* (a sort of mantle without sleeves) which draped it.

She made some curious predictions to assistants at the festival; one of which, in allusion to the spirit of the times, gave out that the future was about to open its great flood-gates.

That was in 1847; so that each person informed of this is in an equal position to ask himself whether it is purely by chance that political events caused that prophecy to come true. Pronounced at one of those moments already charged with electricity, she would have seemed an apocalyptic character; but she came to us as a sibyl and as a sibyl we received her.

The Bohemians of Little Russia seem to have become infected by the profound grief of the Ukranian serfs, which shows itself in them by a great depression of hope and a loss

of pride. Their voice vibrates quite plaintively and their pronunciation seems to drag like a funereal declamation; their singing being also affected in the same way. One of the most pathetic symptoms of this resignation (which, as far as the outward sign is concerned is so complete, but to which their hearts cannot possibly assent) is their habit of calling everything in their possession "little"; such as "little hut," "little field," "little tree," and so forth. This arises from their fear of arousing the cupidity of their masters by allusions to anything which might appear to them to be of sufficient value to seize.

The habit of the women is one which gives further pathos to this idea; for they extend the custom of never mentioning what belongs to them without making the least of it to the beings most near and dear to them. Thus in their love-songs, as well as in their customary expressions of tenderness, they are careful to add the epithet "poor" to any terms of endearment they may employ; thus showing that the idea of compassion is uppermost in their minds. The expressions most commonly in use as between lovers, or from mother to son or daughter, are:

"Oh! you poor little darling,"
"You poor little soul,"
"You poor little dove,"

and so forth.

This melancholy shade of expression becomes particularly evident in the Gipsy women of these parts on account of being allied to the allegorical style of speech; and the amplifications so strongly impressed upon the character of all peoples coming from the Orient. The latter always fuse less readily and completely amongst the Slav races than elsewhere in Europe. This is more particularly evident where there is frequent contact with the Polish nation; which, of all the Slav races, is that which has the most pronouncedly retained the love of emphasis and metaphor of the countries of the Levant.

Thus, in the Ukraine, where the Bohemians have frequent occasion to approach the landed proprietors (who are nearly all Lachi or Poles) their speech shows them to have entirely preserved the incessant use of image and hyperbole. They may also be easily recognised by the tone of popular sentiment in the ordinary amenities of life; for there, better than elsewhere, miserable vagabonds may be seen who (as if they

had not already enough to bear with their more than sufficient load of suffering) are ready to share the grief of those who help them—the only form of gratitude which lies in their power to offer.

Useless, but poetical: like the Bohemian himself.

4.—Gipsy musicians of the Danubian provinces.

At Bucharest and at Jassy we were introduced to several bands of wandering virtuosi; of the same type as those we have in Hungary, who enabled us to become acquainted with a new vein in the mine of musical treasure. They possess melodies so happily conceived that we were tempted to make an interesting collection of them during the long evenings we spent in their company. They differ somewhat perceptibly in character and shading from those of the Bohemians in Hungary. Among the Gipsies of Moldowallachia the spiritual and stimulating principle of the Hungarian Gipsy melody is held in check by the continuous use of pedal-bass. Moreover, this organ-point effect is invariably limited to the tonic; which holds the harmony in such a condition of servitude that it is, as it were, painfully attached to the soil.

With the exception of a few songs all their tunes are intended for dancing and are allowed to retain their primitive destination without interference by the virtuoso, who in Hungary takes the liberty of indulging in caprices of fancy and startling bounds of imaginary dances in order to amuse himself by creating a new version. The charm of such airs is therefore considerably less developed, the effect less vehement, less sparkling and less florid.

The general impression produced is that these guests of the Danubian provinces have been sensibly infected by the soft manners of the country. They are slower in their walk and manner of speech; calmer in their carriage and not so given to gesture; they have lost the old proud and piercing look; the strange smile has gone—they are not so abrupt in their movements; and have even gone so far as to adopt a part of the native costume, the long robe of which goes well with their Mussulman-like gravity. That fury of excitement and nervous impulse to gaiety which is usually caused by the festivals

and entertainments which take place among their distant brethren are to them scarcely known at all—unless, perchance, the fact may be that they more effectually conceal these feelings.

Exteriorly the artistic coquetries, slow ondulations, and wriggling movements of the women's dancing is more reminded of the harem. In short, to realise how utterly their art has been toned down and rendered insipid, it need only be mentioned that the principal part in it is taken by the flute. There is also great use made of an instrument consisting of several pipes placed in a row, similar to that which we call Pandean-pipes, the honeyed tones of which would quite sufficiently cancel the verve of their orchestra without the further effeminating effect produced by the equally free use of a kind of mandoline.

5.—Other Gipsy musicians.

Attracted as we have always been by the powerful interpretations of melancholy and general boldness of Bohemian music, we have naturally sought information about any Zigani artists whom it might be possible to meet in the course of our travels. Their state of dispersion amongst all countries made it comparatively easy to find some everywhere, and the recital of our interviews with them will certainly not be monotonous; for the mere presence of some of these beings (who do not consider themselves our brethren and whom we are scarcely very anxious to receive as such) would be sufficient to cancel all uniformity in our descriptions. But we did not everywhere meet with equal good fortune.

In Spain, for example, luck treated us so very badly that we were unable to collect any precise impressions whatever. If, as we are assured, they cultivate music at all it must be both very slightly and very badly; to judge by the scraps which were exhibited to us in a ceremonious manner, implying that they were considered to be jewels of great price.

All they seem really to possess are some detached fragments of song, generally accompanied without originality upon a wretched guitar; and even these are more Andalusian than Bohemian. The appearance of these Gipsies is of far greater

effect than their music; as for example when they are to be seen at night-fall wandering about the broken columns of the Moorish ruins near the Christianised mosques of Cordova, or among the gorges of Sierra-Morena.

But all the differences we are able to discover between the Bohemian tribes of various countries of the world are, on the whole, of very superficial character. Neither any essential modification of their mode of existence nor any notable difference of race is to be discovered between tribes, however remote from one another in location or acquaintance; for in whatever latitude a troupe of these pilgrims may appear they are faithful to themselves and limit any differences to secondary matters.

The material details of the hazardous industries of the Gipsy may vary somewhat, according to the exterior circumstances of the country in which they happen to be situated, but the miseries, always more or less demoralising, and their habit of doing their best to express in a wordless language those better sentiments which survive in them in spite of all pernicious influences, remains the same. This faculty may be accentuated in some countries and scarcely recognisable in others, but it is always there. It is one capable of being developed in them to an extent which would appear not possible even to dream of in a people sunk so low; but it is really an essential part of their being, and that upon which, when the day of universal remuneration arrives, we may presume they will be judged.

This faculty, belonging so completely to the domain of sentiment, remains apart from the reasoning faculty, and therefore exercises no direct influence upon exterior actions; but its development is entirely a question of opportunity, being always greater or less according to the degree in which it may be favoured by circumstances.

CHAPTER XVI.

A Review of Facts and Probabilities.

1.—The world-mission of the Savage.

THE more we reflect upon this singular people the more we ask ourselves what can have been the origin of their singular attachment to Nature, so devoid of apparent motive and yet so essentially an item of their very existence. Being so devoid of support by reflection, and yet being so powerfully felt, it invests the Gipsy with the principal outlandish traits by which he causes us so much annoyance and disgust.

But there is another question which we are naturally inclined to ask; and that is—

Whence arises his complete lack of all religious inclination?—as closely allied to which we may further enquire.

Why should there be this invincible horror for everything tending to an alliance with any form of civilisation whatever?—and

What cause can there be for this absolute renunciation of all fraternity with other men?

In face of all this, were we to picture a general appeal to nations of the earth to appear before their Creator, we should be uncertain whether the Bohemians (having as it were abdicated the title of man) would not fail to appear.

It may perhaps be truthfully urged that this perpetual open-air existence, with its constant excitement of changing emotions, easily finishes by causing in the soul of the Gipsy a craving for it as irresistible as that for opium, on the part of those unfortunate beings who have yielded to the habit of its

seductive thrill, voluptuous vertigo, and fantastic dreaming. We might go so far as to admit that the want has thereby also been created of an independence and a liberty without limit; and even that this total indifference to all moral and intellectual wants of society as established—this obstinate withdrawal from all occupations which might tend to stop, limit or modify the effusions of such a passion was bound to result from such an insatiable thirst for continual excitement.

But, even if all these enquiries were satisfied, it would still remain to be discovered what has, in the first place, caused this life exclusively passed in the bosom of Nature; so entirely contrary to the instincts of humanity that it cannot even be compared to the savage state. The period remains to be discovered since which the Bohemians have thus definitely relegated themselves to the uninhabited open country; there to be in continual presence of the smiles and severities of their *Alma Mater*. She it is who nourishes all her children; but, unlike the Gipsy, most of them love her only for her smiles, taking shelter from her severities which too often amount even to cruelties.

But, beyond all the above, how is it possible for us to resist a longing for the solution of other mysteries?

What, for instance, is the meaning of this conformity of language, manners, constitution and bearing?

Whence comes that age-long preservation of the same national type and the same physiognomy, both so different from those of other races?

And the enquiry might easily be extended; for still more wonders lie in the identity of moral character and habits, which may probably have lasted a thousand years amongst their tribes, dispersed over countries and continents so distant, and among civilisations and religions so opposed.

The devotion to Nature is no less wonderful; for, though so obstinately and equally felt by all, it is nevertheless so dearly paid for as to pass our comprehension. And this leads us further to enquire—

How does it happen that the Zingalis of the Himalaya so strongly resemble those of Egypt and Turkey? Why are those of Persia so much like those of Russia or England? Or those of Spain like those of Germany or Brazil?

This is a problem which has long occupied the learned as one of the most curious connected with the history of the human race.

In all primitive countries, where savage peoples have exhibited aversion, equal to that of the Bohemians, for notions which Christian conquerors or colonists have brought with them, the germ of such notions has already existed. It is not such notions in themselves, but the particular form in which they are cast which is unacceptable to the savage; probably for the reason that, amongst civilised peoples, such notions are naturally more complicated and developed.

As instances of this it may be observed that, however vague may be their belief in a God, they nevertheless have one.

However elementary may be their worship at the tombs of their fathers; and however simple their rites at the solemn occasions of life, they have nevertheless something which may be described as worship.

However lax their social organisation and however feeble the authority of their chiefs, these things exist.

They have, moreover, some idea of a country, and hold the land quite as we do—free to use or abuse it. When it is invaded they defend it, ferociously but heroically. If beaten they retire and find another; which, after a time, they will be ready to defend in the same way.

Whatever excesses of a strange or revolting character may be prevailing in their midst they have invariably some slight idea of right and wrong. Courage is also a virtue with them, the same as it is with us; whilst practices continually held in honour are those of discipline, fidelity, chastity, piety and the respect for sacred things.

Then again the defeat of enemies representing the sentiment of nationality and protection of the family is a glory for them, precisely as it is with us; the resemblance in this case appearing even more pointed by their pompous celebrations and their preservation of trophies.

When savages are surrounded and pressed by a nation armed with gunpowder and dynamite, they allow themselves to be exterminated rather than renounce what is dear to them. If in some rare cases they allow themselves to be absorbed it is in greatly reduced proportions; a state of things which only serves to hide the disappearance of the race, none the less real. It is well to remember that events of this kind have

happened more frequently than we are informed by our modern historians; who have apparently regarded with disdain an incident of such slight importance to the civilised world as the extinction of a primitive people, unwilling to abdicate its customs and traditional mode of life in favour of lights of which they could not understand the significance.

Their fate need not surprise us if we reflect that nations are born, live and die in the same way as families or individuals; and having even more than they a mission to fulfil. Providence seems to have destined those human families which had fallen into a savage state to people immense spaces, which, if allowed to remain altogether uninhabited, might have become no longer amenable to civilised effort. Ice regions and deserts; wild mountains and perfidious archipelagoes; stony continents like the interior of Asia, marshy as that of Africa, or forest, as that of America. In all such places where, but for these tribes, the earth would not have known of the existence of man, it seems to lie in the order of things that, when once such tribes have accomplished their mission, they should one by one disappear and yield the place they had previously occupied to the Christianised races, regenerated by the blood of the Redeemer and the baptismal waters; leaving these to advance in turn to the countries which their civilisation has yet to purify, enrich and embellish. They are destined to take possession of this entire planet, this domicile of the human race, in obedience to the Divine command at the Creation:

> Benedixitque illis Deus et ait:
> Crescite et multiplicamini et replete terram et subjicite eam.

The work of civilised man is therefore to prepare it, cultivate it, ornament it, and make of it a masterpiece of art, as it is already that of the universe.

History shows the savages to have been unconsciously faithful to their mission. As long as any region remained inaccessible to the settlement of civilised man they occupied it; both animating and subduing it by their presence. They turned it more or less into a domestic habitation, keeping down verminous and formidable animals, preventing inextricable suffocating and poisonous vegetations from spreading and thus invading the soil and endangering life.

When a stronger nation appears upon the scene for the pur-

pose of completing what these have begun they do not feel called upon to take part in it, but yield and perish valiantly rather than live at the edge of a different order.

They want to remain as they are and where they are; because, as they consider themselves as belonging to the country and the country to them, they look upon it as their honourable duty to live and die in it. Even the little handful who allow themselves to be Christianised do not really give up their household gods; inwardly rejecting civilisation, by an irrational instinct stronger than any fear of death. As they do not understand its benefits they refuse its resources, whatever they may happen to be, whether good or bad—except that they are easily led away by glitter as well as demoralised by alcohol. But such faults as these are due simply to ignorance and inexperience, and not to any absence of patriotism; for they do not even know that drunkenness is brutalising: and, whether fasting or tipsy, never consent to leave their native place.

Thus the Zulu chief who, after his representative had visited the English camp and brought back particulars of the mitrailleuse, immediately shot himself, was neither so frightened nor so illogical as might appear at first sight. He understood at once that his people were doomed to extermination if they did not receive the stranger; and, in order not to spread the despair by which he had been himself seized, he doubtless preferred not to survive the moment of his acquiring the fatal certainty. This tragic destiny explains the intensity of the feeling which moves the savage rather to succumb than willingly to allow civilisation to seize his country.

2.—The Bohemian Contrast.

How different it is with the Bohemians!

When the savages repulse civilisation they do not know what they are doing. They fear because they do not understand it. In short, they consider it an unjust invasion of their territory and an infringement of their *right*; for, savages as they are, they do not admit the modern principle that

"Might gives right."

Nothing could be more contrary to this state of mind than the Bohemian habit; for the Gipsy effectively shows that he has no fear of civilisation by continually seeking it out and doing his best to live side by side with it. It is true that, equally with the savage, he refuses to accept it; but that is in spite of understanding it, of taking pleasure in following its track, of stopping near its centres and of doing whatever he can to exploit alike its virtues and its vices.

Contrary to the savage, the Bohemians have so little fear of their race ever becoming absorbed or destroyed by any form of civilisation whatever—ever being drowned in its blood, or being intoxicated by its perfumes; they look upon it as so impossible that they should ever change in any way or be other than themselves that they have frequented civilisation until its proximity to them has been an utter necessity. They like to live near it and in its shadow; enjoying certain of its features which happen to reach them, but disdaining to become too deeply immersed. Who can say that the disdain does not proceed from their having too quickly perceived the infernal aspect of civilisation, and for want of knowing its better side?

But, although he resembles the savage in not allowing civilisation to approach him, the Bohemian's motive is quite a different one. He is not defending his patrimony or paternal heritage; for he has none. Like the bird upon the tree, he alights for the moment upon any land he comes across, and his existence is as fluid as the brook whose ripples go more frequently underground than they remain visible.

Whatever may be the soil which the Gipsy treads under foot, he has no desire to claim it, and would be the most miserable of men were he compelled to adopt it.

Similar to those plants which grow between disjointed masonry, they vegetate in the interstices between the agglomerations of civilised people; not with any hope of one day acquiring a region which they would be able to call their own, as is the case with other nations; but from the pure determination not to have a country. All countries are the same to them providing the sky is warm; for these tropical natures dread continual cold. Northern countries are what they most avoid, as they would perish altogether in the bleak regions lit up by *aurora borealis*; but, outside that condition, their preferences are few. Steep mountains, sandy shores, hills or valleys, the vastest plains, the widest rivers, the most arid country; all is

as one to them subject to civilisation being close at hand; the very society the securities of which the Gipsy will not share because he will not assume its duties.

Although they have no remembrance of any country possessed by them anterior to their actual nomadic existence, they have never, in any of their endless peregrinations, sought out a steppe, an island, a coast, or any mountain slope, unoccupied, with a view to calling it their own, in order that they might be born, live and die there according to their traditions, rites, laws or customs. That is not all. It is probable that, were a district to be freely offered to them, promising every possible material advantage, and it were said to them:

"This is yours; cultivate it, subjugate it, and make it your country,"

they would not be capable of fulfilling such an undertaking. They could not consent either to fish or hunt or carry on any occupation with the regularity necessary for producing an improvement of well-being; nor could they become labourers or shepherds; nor could they manufacture or trade, like the peoples they visit.

They will consent neither to form a nation for themselves nor to incorporate with any other.

3.—General features of the Problem.

The indelible resemblance between the most distant Bohemian tribes bears witness to a common vital principle; demonstrating not only a community of race but also of national origin—the latter implying in its turn a community of certain primordial impressions. But, as the Bohemians have necessarily been aborigines somewhere, and as it is equally certain that they have not spread over the earth without starting from some central point, is it not reasonable to suppose that there must have been strange vicissitudes and incomprehensible ill-fortune to have brought about a state of existence so contrary to the instincts of all the rest of the human family?

Does it not seem, too, that they must have long practised this mode of life while they still remained a compact mass? Surely they must have been for ages living in the way we see them now as dispersed, for the sentiments which characterise

them to have become so infiltrated in their blood, infused into their soul, stamped upon their minds and impregnated in their memory as to have created a nature which never plays false and never deviates; however spread their branches may be over East and West, or North and South. So strange is this nature that first impressions would incline to doubt its belonging to the human species.

A terrible necessity must for ages have weighed continuously upon a population able to live through conditions so frightfully abnormal and never be brought to the point of "accepting" them. We use the word "accept" designedly in this place, because of certain necessary distinctions which we will explain.

We do not "accept" what destiny imposes; we submit to it. So, accordingly, does the savage; whose intellectual faculties are too obliterated to allow him any escape. We "accept" only what comes to us from other men; what we could refuse if we would, and against which in any case we could revolt to the death.

When therefore we say of a people that they "accept" anything, then, whatever the object may be, there is a pre-supposition of contact with other peoples living under different conditions; but the exceptional character of the Bohemian's mode of existence does not allow us for a moment to suppose that his race had as aborigines any contact with other peoples. He could only have acquired his incorrigible habit of living upon other people whilst in a state of proud idleness; from which it follows that for a long time there must have been within his reach those who not only had plenty for themselves but to spare; in other words, he must have been within touch of civilisation.

Thus it becomes quite evident that as the primitive condition of this people could not possibly have been one of alms, swindling, smuggling or theft, it must at some time or other, have been overthrown; and, if so, as this could only have been done by some conquering race the conceived hatred is sufficient to account for the habits which are so strange, but which they are determined not to give up.

A people with whom unproductivity is adopted as a principle, who hide themselves like a parasitic plant or animal within the splits and cracks of other men's property, and who gather food as best they can, recognising no obligation to earn

it, would never have been able to present this anomaly and entrench it beyond the reach of any kind of influence except after the date of their being shut in by conquerors—after their having been probably forced to this extremity in order to avoid complete suppression.

This necessity must have been supported by a sentiment not only unanimous but of identical character and great intensity. It must also have been the sentiment of a very great number to have left such an indelible impression upon their remote descendants as to impart a national colour to each individual. Moreover, the character thus formed could never have become so ineffaceable but by the aspect of an infinity of living examples.

The imagination of a people is neither so forcibly struck nor is the imprint of a type so faithfully guarded, except by a succession of facts compulsorily endured and acted upon for long periods *before* the separation from one another of its groups. An obstinacy so constant in rejecting the advantages of social life as that which the Bohemians have shown on every continent, before every faith and legislation and face to face with such different civilisations, must have been preceded by an anterior persistence which certainly was not of a mere passing kind.

Man is not so insensible to the sweets of religion and patriotism, home and family that he would willingly renounce them or adopt a settled disdain for all regulated existence unless the tradition had already existed for many, many generations before the time when those who spread themselves over the various countries exposed themselves to such great temptations.

Without a previous age-long hardening their nationality would assuredly have never resisted the natural tendency to dissolve into a quantity of small groups, widely separated, and both totally and mutually ignorant of one another's very existence.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Aborigines of Hindustan.

1.—Sufferings of the Parias.

AMONGST the learned people who occupy themselves with this strange phenomenon the majority agree that the Gipsies originally came from India; basing this conclusion upon the resemblance of their idiom to Sanscrit. This may be considered the principal foundation of their judgment; but they also rely upon the likeness of the Gipsy type and physiognomy to that of the Hindoo, as well as upon their reproduction of certain traits still to be met with amongst the inhabitants of certain parts of India.

These authorities consider the Gipsy to be nominally an offshoot of that part of the ancient population of Hindustan to which had been given the name of

"Parias."

This hypothesis is so generally favoured by those who are deemed expert in such matters that it may now be taken as universally admitted; and we must acknowledge that, for our own part also, it seems the most probable supposition from either psychological or poetical points of view.

The position occupied by the Parias in the sacrosanct hierarchy of Hindustan was below the whole of the four castes which compose the nation. The legend of these four castes, which was later on elevated by Manon, the legislator, to the dignity of a dogma, describes the four castes as of unequal origin; consisting of the following:

1. The Brahman,

the priestly and scientific class; as a caste attributed to breath from the mouth of the great Brahm, creator.

2. The Khyattryas,

the warrior noble class; as a caste attributed to the work of the hands of the great Brahm.

3. The Waïschias,

the agricultural and trading class; as a caste attributed to the movement of his loins.

4. The Soudras,

the artisan and labourer class; as a caste attributed to the shadow of his feet.

According to the dogma which includes an account of the commencement of things, as well as in accordance with the above, the Parias (who did not belong at all to the Aryan race) were looked upon as outside humanity, not having been in the same way, and as in the case of each of the four castes, drawn from divine substance.

The Parias were doubtless an indigenous people who inhabited this continent before the Aryas, taking possession of it, some three or four thousand years before our era. They came to such a peremptory decision to remain there for ever that they decreed a severe penalty against any of their sons who should hereafter dare to quit it. The penalty was no less than deprivation of the right, which all the good of their privileged race enjoy, to a happy eternity in the arms of Brahma.

If the Parias had not existed it might have been thought that in crossing the Indus the Aryas had come to what was an uninhabited country. But it is certain on the contrary that they encountered an indigenous people whom they rendered subject; for no nation would be likely to decree such an ostracism as that relating to the Parias against a half of its own body, or in other words excommunicate a large portion of itself. No nation dooms part of itself to execration, refusing it fire and water as social elements; any more than a man is ever found to curse an organ of his own body. However low may be its function to him it is sacred; either being to some extent representative of his life, or, at least, should it be disordered, representing a drain upon his vital force.

The existence of the Parias leads therefore inevitably to the thought that the Aryas found in the country which they seized from its first occupants a people impossible to exterminate on account of their number, impossible to subdue on account of their incorrigible pride, and impossible to employ usefully on account of their slight intellectual capacity.

The events which must have followed the Aryans coming to these conclusions are entirely unknown to us, though we shall be quite safe in attributing them either to the vengeance and exasperation provoked by a desperate resistance, or to the simple crushing logic of the *væ victis*. In either case this people, dispossessed, dispersed and subjugated, were treated with a harshness without example in the history of conquests.

The whole of the conquered race were decreed to be impure. Their contact, their approach, their breath, even the sight of them, was held to be a defilement for those of the holy race, beloved of the gods. The religion to which these inflexible precepts were due might be described as one forged in iron, cast like bronze, or sculptured like granite; rather than written upon fine long palm-leaves in the beautifully soft Indian tongue.

It is known that the Parias were unfortunately deprived of all possession of land, even of a field or garden, and could have no fixed habitation; as if they had no more need for such than a brute animal. They could possess nothing—no corner of earth, nor tree, nor anything built by the hand of man and serving for a dwelling. They were cast out from towns and villages; or, if their momentary presence was tolerated, it was only for the purpose of performing some ignoble task. They were considered not only as beasts of burden but also unclean; so that their lives were estimated as of less value than those of ordinary cattle. They were forbidden to carry out their worship, or to use any rites in connection with those acts of existence which all populations purify and sanctify by special ceremony, as a means of attaching themselves to the divinity and consecrating themselves to him. Caverns were alone allowed them as refuge, and they were expected to be born like dogs, to procreate and ultimately die like jackals.*

* Borrow translates the word *Romma* (which is that by which the Gipsies call themselves) as *husband* or *male*. If that be so in the Romany language it furnishes another trace of their ancient condition as

They were refused a law or right of any kind; being prevented from governing themselves or from being ruled amongst themselves by any fixed principle or by any code whatever.

In the Bohemians of to-day their descent from the Parias—that is to say from a down-trodden people whose civilised masters purposely destroyed their rule and worship in order to degrade them to a semi-bestial level—their descent from these could not be more unmistakably shown than by the complete absence amongst them of all authority—religious, moral or parental. The title "authority" can scarcely be given to the phantom of a chief, sometimes elected by a tribe, and whose right is limited to choosing the encampment, the road to take, and so forth; which is no more than that of the leader of a troop of animals, or which that of a flock of passage-birds would assume.

Now, the facts so far enumerated are certain; and although the Aryas were not, like the Jews, disposed to cultivate the kind of servitude which led to Oriental despotism, they must have been well aware of the surest way of degrading a population already inferior, by its absence of culture and organisation, to a state little above that of the domestic animals. The method was to take away from it all religious and social authority, leaving it only Liberty; and carefully to suppress all counterpoise to that Liberty, except physical punishments for any encroachment upon, or violation of, prohibited domain.

The fact was open to them that man can no more establish a society without divine authority for its foundation and human authority for its basis than he can establish a city upon

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Parias. The conquerors, having shared among themselves the four human castes of priests, warriors, labourers and artisans, emanating from four parts of Brahma's body, there was no further room for the subdued race within the ranks of humanity. They were accordingly only called *males*; as indicating their office being merely to procreate, and as not being eligible for any of the social classes. The Parias seem to have first endured it, then adopted it, and finally to have turned its derisive feature into one of pride reflecting on those they call *Giorgia* the disgust inspired by effeminacy.

"In their language, which is no jargon but a Hindoo dialect, the Ziganos call themselves Rommischels; meaning *son of woman*. Reduced to utter misery, having generally no shelter but the sky and no food except what they may be lucky enough to steal, they look upon themselves as the only lords of creation. Their pride consoles them for the disdain they inspire." ("La Hongrie et la Valachie." Ed. Thouvenel, 1846.)

the waters, or upon the desert's moving sands. Every human society requires for its establishment, development and prosperity an assured stability, or moral as well as physical ground —in addition to which there must be a movement of fluctuation, an equilibrium which is the product of the fluid elements of free-will. It finds its stability in the principle of authority, its life-motion in the principle of liberty. Without liberty its vital forces become paralysed or choked. But without authority, the agglomerative principle of societies, that to which they owe their consistency, evaporates and they remain without cohesion.

Having neither the *authority* which gives a people its head and thought, nor the *work* which rules and directs its liberty, the Bohemians give irresistible signs of proceeding from those Parias who were violently robbed of those two prime conditions of all social organism: the authority which constitutes, and the labour which gives it life.

2.—Various theories of their descent.

At sight of the frightful cruelty of which the Parias have been victims a compassionate interest inspires the desire to know more of these aborigines who were so obstinately attached to their independence. They were thinly spread over the country no doubt; for, had they been dense, they would not have been easily subjugated, and they were to be found in all parts of Hindustan; had they been massed in one district they would have been surrounded and starved out.

The conditions named therefore are probably what the Aryas found when, arriving from the plains of Mesopotamia or from the mountains of Circassia, they entered the immense peninsula by crossing the Indus in order to follow the Himalayas and reach the Ganges.

The Aryas were a people proud of their race, and with reason; for they were the bearers of a civilisation advanced in speculative science, possessed of a sublime poetry of tender and heroic ideal character, and whose religion was full of traditional truths and austere and mystic virtues.

The aborigines, on the other hand, having fared badly at the hands of fate, had probably no properly appointed heads

or well-defined traditions, no elaborate worship or political organisation, no antique legislation, science, poetry, industry, art or literature. In the eyes of the Aryas, therefore, the aborigines must have been mere bipeds to be estimated; on the same scale, and scarcely occupying any higher place, than the most intelligent quadrupeds of the zone of Hindustan.

But what were they?—this race which appeared to the Aryas as beneath the level of humanity. Whence did they come?

For those who hold that man is only an improvement of the monkey, and that improvement of the monkey might easily appear in various parts of the earth, the Parias, considered as an indigenous race of Hindustan, are only a less improved type (say, proceeding from the monkeys of the Himalayas) whereac the Aryas are a more improved type proceeding from the more advanced monkeys of some other country. After this, it is difficult to find anything to say.

But there are other thinkers of a kind sometimes called "out of date"—those who attach importance to the unity of the human species, because without it there could be no question of

Liberty, Equality, Fraternity,

either shouted, proclaimed, or even murmured. Evidently the inferior races could have neither right to an equal liberty, nor to any real equality, nor to any fraternity of the veritable kind. Their just fate would consist in obeying the superior race, like the horse and mule. If, in any fit of impious extravagance or of superior material strength, one of these races revolted against the legal guardianship pronounced upon its puerility, then, according to this theory, it would be equitable and in conformity with Nature's law to reduce it to the hardest servitude, to pursue and even exterminate it, if need be, like some evil breed.

Such a theory as this would evidently justify the Hindoos for having inflicted upon the indigenous population of the latitudes they desired to conquer the treatment they meted out to the Parias in degrading them as they did.

This conclusion may also do very well for advocates of the slave trade and of negro slavery; like the so-called avengers of certain ancient defeats who, in England, for example, place Celt against Briton, Briton against Saxon, and Saxon against Norman. But this sort of outcome will not content those "out

of date" thinkers aforesaid; those learned Christians who have an explanation to give of the problem of the aborigines found in Hindustan when the Aryas went there, quite different from that of making them descend from various kinds of monkeys.

All this merely amounts to advancing hypothesis for hypothesis; and, since there are so many wise men (as well as others not so very wise) all ready with hypotheses based on nothing but their own fancy, why should there not be one reared upon an exclusively biblical foundation?

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Moral and Religious View

1.—The argument from Biblical sources.

WHY not take as point of departure the fact that Nimrod did not earn the title of being a great hunter before God* merely because he had killed an infinity of tigers and elephants? Why not consider the title "great hunter" as relating to the explorations which Nimrod may have made in travelling eastward across Asia; even to the mouths of the great Chinese rivers? These explorations must have been originally accompanied by a great multitude of men, women and children; for, in those early ages, the human species went on multiplying at a rate so prodigious as to appear fabulous to our statisticians of the present day.

As our bold explorer proceeded, feeding his people principally by hunting and fishing, numerous groups would be sure to remain behind, and, little by little, develop into small peoples completely sown across the vast continent. It only required time for such small peoples to develop into autonomous nations; always expecting the return of their own, but never having the expectation realised, for the reason that the "great hunter," in returning, never alighted upon exactly the same route as he had used in the first place. Thus propagating, ramifying and dividing, these nations would before long have peopled the whole of Central Asia; across the continent to Siberia in the north, as also to Cochin China in the south; whilst the most advanced (the river and sea-coast pop-

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* Gen. x, 9.

ulations) would attain, stage by stage and generation by generation, to Japan in the first place; then to the islands of the Pacific; until finally some of the boldest spirits would have ventured as far as North and South America, Australia and New Zealand; crossing the sea in boats probably of the Periagina flat-bottomed type, but at any rate in craft too slender to make it desirable to return.

All the while he was not stopped by some boundless horizon or furious tempest the great Nimrod column could advance. Explorers of his race such as Gengis-Khan and Tamerlane were to follow him; but in the meantime this "great hunter before God" could go on planting advanced posts, or, in other words, establishing intermediary colonies, to be linked up with his own power.

It was to the farthest removed that he was obliged to leave the greatest number of heads—such as sages, men versed in the sciences and arts, as well as in those industries which the descendants of Ham cultivated with care and ardour. He would have given to his intermediary colonies but very few priests, legislators or teachers; in the idea that such requirements could always be supplied from one or other centre of east or west.

It will be asked, perhaps, why these numerous colonies lost both religion and legislation. In China, which must have been the principal Nimrodian establishment, only an almost illegible trace of the descent from Ham is to be found. This consists in the *dualism* revealed by the primitive worship of heaven and earth. Of this some slight visible signs exist in the temples, and there are also some slight moral signs in the rites which are annually performed there; but every vestige of whatever might have been so construed has disappeared from the popular mind and has done so ever since the time of Confucius. For a long time there has been no remembrance preserved of the signification of these rites; but now, thanks to innumerable hieroglyphics, we are enabled to penetrate the metaphysical and theological sense of the religion of Mizraïm, the son of Ham.

The religion which Mizraïm gave to the people whom he established on the banks of the Nile we may well believe was the same as that practised by Nimrod; for they must both have inherited it from Ham. It must not be confounded with that of Noah, or Shem, or Japhet; and the first thing to strike one

in examining it is the analogy existing between the ancient dualism of the Chinese and that of the Egyptians. We find, for instance, in the supreme adoration of heaven and earth, symbols of Spirit and Matter equally divine and co-eternal; the equivalent of the Kneph and Nepte of the Egyptians. But there are also the supreme Egyptian divinities; scarcely known to the crowd, but adored in the secret sanctuaries of Thebes and Phyle, as well as in those more retired still of Lybia; and there, also, as Spirit and Matter, equally divine and eternal.

These beliefs constitute an utter negation of the monotheism of Noah. Ham had no doubt been instructed in this religion so opposed to that of the "children of God"; which will explain his derision of his father and tend to show that the fact recounted by Moses was only the culmination of a course of such conduct.

In the hypothesis which we have just given out the two most illustrious offshoots of the second son of Noah (for Nimrod was as well descended from Ham as Mizraïm) would have given to the continent the two oldest and the most tenacious civilisations of the globe; one being at the east of Africa and the other at the east of Asia—in other words, the Egyptian and the Chinese. In the meantime, by a process in all probability very diverse, their descendants invested the two vast continents with a population black in Africa, yellow in Asia, swarthy in the two Americas and the intermediate islands.

These populations seem to have had no object in history but to take first possession of the various countries, in order to penetrate them with human influence. Ham, having been cursed, his descendants had been doomed to this mission, the lowest of all; in expiation of his sin. The great majority of them remained upon a level of civilisation far inferior to that attained by the descendants of Shem and Japhet, whose slaves they frequently became; and also frequently re-became after having succeeded once in throwing off the yoke.

So was fulfilled as prophesied by Noah:

Maledictus Chanaan, servus servorum erit fratribus suis,*

notwithstanding the intellectual and political grandeur which some of these descendant nations attained. Their develop-

* Gen. ix, 24.

ment in this sense took place not only in China but especially in Egypt; that being the country which had been directly fashioned by Mizraïm, who was a genius both as legislator and metaphysician.

Some also will want to know what were the exterior circumstances, the psychological inclinations and necessities, which made their particular imprint upon and gave an individual character to each of the Nimrod colonies; as the sciences, arts and industries of the great Ham family went on fading from their memory for want of heads sufficiently instructed to continue them and for want of artists and philosophers advanced enough to teach these professions; which, in its turn, arose from the want of matter and means of execution for their works. It is quite natural to suppose that the groups established on his journey by Nimrod when he went from Babylon to Pekin and returned from Pekin to Babylon, by their necessary increase, would develop dissimilar characters. Beyond the inclinations and temperament of their first founders there would be the kind of life induced by the particular country in which they had settled, and the manners and customs therefrom resulting. A nation of hunters, for example, would be proof against fatigue, courageous and cruel; whilst a pastoral people would be calm, tranquil, home-loving and timid.

Then again some will say (better than we should here be able) that, besides the colonies strategically appointed by Nimrod and designed by him to serve as landmarks to the populations about to people his new conquests, there were, in all likelihood, a quantity of groups compelled to remain behind by one form or other of necessity. Fatigue, ennui, unexpected difficulties, revolt against dangers to overcome; feminine conditions, weakness of the children, the sick or the injured—any or all of these in turn might cause the stoppage of a group.

The fact is that whatever groups were made must have been formed entirely by chance. The only predetermination would probably be a mutual promise to meet again when the great horde returned with Nimrod to his capital. It has sometimes happened that these groups, in detaching from the main body, have kept neither chief, sage, artist nor expert workman of any kind. These men, recognised as rare and precious, were

shared out very orderly and carefully in the grand centres; which we may assume were founded upon a fixed political plan.

It has been just as easy for considerable nations to result from the groups abandoned through necessity as that they should arise from the colonies better furnished by Nimrod with a view to their future. Some were redoubtable by their number and brutal force; others, somewhat better furnished with superior knowledge, became in time more or less important; either according to their vigour and cohesion or according to their respect for traditions and primitive remembrances. The most remarkable of these were, without question, China and Japan. Others grew up a thousand years later, taking Islam for their religion; a monotheism superior to the pure geniolatry into which most of them had fallen. All notion of the supernatural possessed by the majority was limited to that of evil spirits, with whom their sorcerers were in constant relations; as may still be observed among the savage tribes of America, the natives of Oceana, the inhabitants of Kamschatka and so forth; as well as among the mountain dwellers of Southern Asia.

There may still be met with in some of the most out-of-the-way places of the continent of Asia families more or less savage, but at the same time manageable, rather ferocious and given to sorcery, and presenting a sort of family likeness; who may reasonably be regarded as degenerated descendants of the original inhabitants of these regions.

If this be once admitted, is it not natural to conjecture that the indigenous people found by the Aryas in the great Indian peninsula as already inhabiting that vast country originally formed part of the great Nimrod column? To judge by the inferior condition in which these nations appeared to the Aryas we can well imagine such outcasts of fate to be descended from one of those tribes whom fatigue, sickness or rebellion had compelled to forsake the conqueror's army.

The Aryas, finding them deprived of all tradition, all definite belief, all set worship, and of every other primordial notion of the kind appertaining to the human species, declared them incapable of belonging to it. They had been forsaken by the conqueror; who, in his anger and disdain, had not provided them with any condition of civilised life. He had granted them no heads or sages, or men versed in science and

industry and capable of leaving secrets to their survivors. The great chief must have refused to deprive himself for their sake of any of those superior intelligences who might have taught them a religion, as well as arts and trades, for the benefit of future generations.

The instinctive need which at that time inspired every human family to engage in the discovery of unknown lands will have actuated new adventurers to cross the chain of the Himalayas extending to the South. There would probably have developed a much stronger feeling of this kind in a people so outcast and forgotten; and, if they passed the mountain-chain during the fine season, it is likely that they would not be able to return (on account of the difficulty of tracing the same passes or the same features of the land) to enable themselves to remain in communication with their headquarters—their mother-country.

In a climate so propitious to every kind of growth as India, branches separated from their trunk, so soon multiply, that in a short space an immense region was covered with men in a completely uncultivated condition; having scarcely more than a vague and far-off remembrance of religious and historical traditions possessed by their forefathers; those who had seen Nimrod.

The great migrations of Noah's grandson must have caused a great commotion in their day. The sons of Japhet would be well aware of that; and, perhaps finding countries which they had known only by hearsay already peopled, they assigned to the populations at once their veritable origin.

Quite certainly the curse of Ham still lived in the scared and terrified imaginations of these grandsons of Japhet; who clung so religiously to their dogmatic inheritance, although they were constantly corrupting its forms. It was then easy for the Brahmins, kings and chiefs of the various Aryan castes, to fill the entire nation with a sense of profound horror for the cursed and abhorred progeny of Ham, which they made out the Parias to be; in attributing to them at first a source—but later on a creation—inferior in every sense to their own.

Starting from that point, nothing seemed too hard or too inhuman to prevent the mixture of the Parias with their own race; foreseeing that the result of such unions would be to degrade the highest without ennobling the lowest; to introduce half-bred, the purer element in whom would soon be extin-

guished by the multitude; and therefore to infect the Aryas for ever—they the innocent—with the terrible and disastrous effects of the malediction reserved for the progeny of Ham.

2.—The Parian persecution.

These Parias, whose primitive name we do not know, must have been of gentle character, child-like and credulous, of absolute ignorance, without the slightest speculative notion, or any idea whatever rising above the supply of daily needs. If, as we may easily believe, they originated in one of those swarms which fell out of themselves as by their own intrinsic weight from Nimrod's walking hive (one of the groups considered by him as composed of impotents without power of resistance, unable to preserve themselves from deadly influences and condemned soon to perish as the victims either of severities of weather or of the rapacity of wild beasts), surely we might expect such a collection of the descendants of families feeble in health and spirit, poor in physical strength and intellect, as well as deprived of all culture to have had from the beginning some sense of their own inferiority.

When, later on, having become more numerous (but also more ignorant and savage), their soil was invaded by a people so advanced as the Aryas, they could be easily persuaded that the invaders were of a different and superior order of being; especially if they had already lost all antediluvian traditions.

They saw their conquerors construct temples for which it was necessary even to hollow mountains. They saw them erect palaces so gorgeous that the eye became dazzled at the aspect. They could perceive that the scientific knowledge commonly possessed by the invaders was what their own heads religiously guarded as mysteries; and that laws were decreed for good government. They observed the elders and judges who had been appointed for administration; the arts which had been invented; the industries which were practised, and the crafts which were exercised. These were all institutions of which they, the Parias, had not previously even suspected the existence; and they could therefore easily believe what the Hindoos told them: that they were an inferior race, with no right to the advantages created by superior nations and with no god representing them in the heaven of divinities.

As to their own gods if they had ever had any (as may fairly be presumed) they were already given over to the worshippers of other gods, leaving no available reply to denials of their existence. What cruel conclusions flow naturally from these premises!

Thus reduced to live under the ban of humanity it must have appeared, as demonstrated to these unfortunate people, that they formed no part of it; since they could not find either sufficient innate force, or acquire intellectual power, to react against such assertions and compulsions.

Once arrived at the point of admitting that, whilst other nations had each their god in the heavens, they, the Parias, had none, they probably resigned themselves, without hatred or imprecations, to be given over to Nature; without providence or succour. Belief in the passing of the soul after death into some other body might offer them a confused and uncertain idea of the supernatural as it appeared to them, and would therefore tend to show how the undeveloped intelligence of this could be quickly degraded by the influence of such a subtle and mysterious faith as that of the Brahmins. Their belief in this dogma must have arisen from one of two causes. Either they had already some preliminary conception of it, imperfectly transmitted, amongst the notions left them by their first ancestors; or they accepted it from their conquerors as the most favourable way of interpreting their repudiation; the best way of bearing the profound degradation into which they were cast.

To begin with, the Parias bore and even "accepted" the inhuman lot forced upon them by the Aryas, in the country where they had allowed themselves to be surprised—having neither energy nor sufficient arms to defend themselves or retire into entrenchments and remain a nation intact. Craft and astuteness would very likely engender and grow within their minds; but, by themselves, they could never suffice to redeem the fall. Powerless as remedies, they nevertheless served as palliatives; and were in that way carefully employed as occasion served.

But, beyond all this, the continual sense of being despised and persecuted must undoubtedly have actuated many amongst them to such a strong feeling of revolt as to resolve to put an end to it at any price. Incapable of traitorous hatreds, cruel reprisals, incendiary ambush, or other crimes of

violence, they preferred flight to the adoption of such measures; and the families who then began the attempt could have had little scruple in abandoning a country in which both heaven and earth had been taken from them; where heaven was too high to be reached by their invocation and the earth too beautiful for them to cultivate.

Those who were first in deciding this lot to be totally unbearable probably remembered some accounts—some descriptive shreds relating to scenes of nomadic life through which their fathers had passed. Then, shaking off their natural idleness, they sought within themselves a strength and force of will hitherto unexercised; in order to escape their miserable fate by quitting the land in which it had overtaken them.

We can easily picture their first sending out young people for reconnaissance; at one time in the direction of the mountains and at another of the sea. News received from the first who ventured being good, or at least promising, others would venture; until at last a whole tribe, under a chief, would continue to leave together. At departure, they would either seek in the North the plains by which they had come, or they would follow the long rivers running south and leading to shores unknown.

Did they expect better fortune? They knew nothing, and were simply tempting fate.

But we may be sure that these mournful exiles did not forget to send messengers to the brothers they had left behind. The fact of these being able to penetrate so far would no doubt create a strong desire to imitate them; to cross the mountains or the waters, and to lead a wandering life. The life would at least be independent; it would place them out of the reach of punitive prescriptions; which, by branding them with a sort of infamy, made them envy the brute beasts. The lives of the latter were at least respected and the sight of them never considered impure.

In this way probably successive migrations were accomplished, for which we must not look to history to tell us either *when* or *how*; for it knows nothing of the point of departure, the place of arrival, or particulars of the journey.

It is indeed scarcely to be expected that what has completely passed from the memory of men so badly treated by their fellow-creatures as to banish themselves will be likely to survive in the memory of others. There may be secret tra-

ditions existing here and there amongst them, calculated to link them up with the land from which they drew their type, language, complexion, temperament and agility. But, even if so, who can unearth them from their present places of mysterious burial, or extract them from those to whom they have been entrusted?

3.—The course of subsequent events.

Child-like by nature, and rendered more so by oppression, these voluntary exiles would be sure to appreciate as a luxury that, in whatever locality they might find themselves, they were no longer treated as Parias, considered to be outside the human species, and regarded merely as brute beasts capable of speech. This happiness so satisfied them that their unambitious character required nothing more from life. Their mind, naturally limited, besides being artificially cramped and intimidated by the sudden load of subjection which had fallen upon them, was not equal to the task of creating anywhere a new and better existence. They could not fathom the possibility of acquiring human rights in fields already belonging to other people, when they were even refused what they already possessed in their own territory. They could not realise that an industrious sedentary life, even if gay and careless, could be effective in setting them up in a new country; when their innocent life, without crime or violence, had been of no avail in sheltering them, as being weak, from the worst possible outrage of the strong.

It had been affirmed to them in the name of a religion, of which they did not understand a word but of the crushing weight of which there was no doubt, that the Hindoos alone constituted the cream of humanity and that beings, though gifted with reason and language, if not of their race, formed merely one of many intermediary links uniting all living creatures into one unbroken chain.

Their conquerors were justly proud of their superiority in many respects; but who can say whether these Parias, at the moment of leaving for ever because of being condemned to occupy the position of a mere link between man and the brute creation, did not feel, on the contrary, a sentiment essentially

human in their hearts; however disguised or masked it may have been in order to escape detection by their oppressors?

Who knows that it was not from the very depth of so much degradation that that peculiar pride was evoked in them of which nothing was formerly known?

Who knows that it was not from that very time that they became fired with a certain unavowed haughtiness, in adopting their tent as dwelling; and a degradation of principle which takes the denial of all law and religion for its watchword?

It is since that time that they have preferred to be miserable and free, rather than accord the right to any merciless race or society to hold them in its grasp and thus persecute and enslave them at will.

Who knows whether these aborigines, whom the Hindoos so ruthlessly transformed into Parias, did not make it a point of honour to accept with a stoical courage the hard lot which had been forced upon them, and to dispense cheerfully alike with gods and legislators?

Their oppressors had declared to them, axe and torch in hand, that they were of an inferior species; and that had even seemed probable to them. Taking it therefore for granted, they had to consider their future relations with their superiors as of the same nature in one direction as with the lower animals, their inferiors, in another; and it practically follows that, on far-off continents, those Parias, the Gipsies of our day, should live side by side with civilisations other than that of the Aryas, but which they look upon as equally unfriendly. They were, in fact, as hostile; but, even if they had not been so, they would have been just as completely repulsed; the feeling having become thoroughly established to beware of all civilisation.

At the time when the Aryas, having despoiled them of the country in which they had so peacefully lived as never to dispute existence to any but a noxious plant or beast, proceeded to exclude them from all share in the rights and benefits of their civilisation, the Parias in return resolved to equally exempt themselves from all duties and charges relating to it.

Their single rule of conduct, as also their single national principle, was the total refusal alike of *work* and of *obedience* to any law; in whatever form it might be presented. In their estimation the instant it becomes compulsory it is synonymous with slavery. Now, there is no society, whatever may be the

religion it professes or whatever may be the political form it has adopted, which can grant letters of ennoblement without these two imperative conditions; work being the indispensable cement of the edifice and law determining its form, its foundations, statics, width and elevation.

At the present time it may be regarded as quite impossible to undeceive these Gipsy people. Never more will they be either willing or able to look upon any partial attempt to civilise them otherwise than as traps and perfidies, similar to the line or cord which is used to rob birds or wild horses of their liberty. They at once imagine the intention to be either to make them beasts of burden or beasts for show, like bears or asses. Feeling themselves to be above such a purpose as well as too superior to those animals to be taken with the same bait and enticements, they are indifferent to all seduction and are not to be caught by any charm. This trait alone would suffice to enable us to recognise them as the offspring of those Parias who decided to abandon their native country—the country of the eternal Himalayan snows.

Whether in that departure they glided furtively between the gorges; or whether, in some way not easy to divine at present, they were able to cross the seas and thus find their way to Egypt; certain it is that they gave themselves out as being natives of the latter country. The fact of thus calling themselves "Egyptian" has every appearance of having been from fear of being recognised, pursued and perhaps brought again under an odious subjection. On the meeting of these two races who shall say that some secret sign has not revealed their equal ancient descent from Ham, the son of Noah?

Only to consider the sequence of moral cause and effect nothing could be more true than the origin which has just been attributed to the Bohemians. When we think of the execrable lie of which they were victims—a monstrosity without any equal, considering that no conquerors elsewhere have ever denied to the conquered their quality as human beings—we are bound to consider these people as eminently pacific and humble in character; for, otherwise, there must have been terrible reprisals, a mutual destruction and general catastrophe. Courage was not wanting, as experience has proved—too often to allow the submission to be regarded as cowardice.

These Bohemians, who are always the same wherever we encounter them, are still, as they must have been in their own

country, of a temperament patient and fierce at the same time. Indomitable but without anger; passionate but dreamy; having no sense for either the True or Good, but a truly exquisite perception of the Beautiful; all tends to show how true it is that the curse of the Lord, as celestial punishment, is not directed against the sinner's manhood, but in order that he may be converted and live.

This lingering ray of hope for the beautiful, remaining in the soul of men so degraded in every other sense, might, little by little, open their minds to a sense of the true, and their hearts to a sense of the good; if Christians were willing to take the pains to conduct them, step by step, along invisible paths by means of which, from sentiment, we reach comprehension; and from comprehension to the appropriation of revealed truth; the gift of heaven to man.

In an age like this, when there is every sign of immense progress in the destinies of man, the most daring hope may well be entertained; even that of seeing a race pardoned after having suffered so much, because it has found within itself a means of regeneration.

Every decree of justice, every punishment which does not actually destroy, must lose some of its intensity as time goes on; and, since the curse upon Ham has allowed a poetic vein to survive in this lost thread of his posterity, it is permissible to hope that the Paria-Bohemian will be regenerated and rehabilitated; in this new epoch the dawn of which is so full of promise.

4.—The Gipsy and Religion.

If when the Bohemians came to Europe long centuries had already convinced them of the inferiority of their race as compared with the rest of humanity, it was less strange that they should come than that they should have been quite unable to differentiate between Christianity and other religions. Religion generally being, in their obscured vision, something not intended for their use, they looked upon all religious systems as equally arbitrary in their ordinances, whether they originated with Manon or Buddha, Mahomet or Christ. They admired the celestial existence of all these divine beings and the

equal truth of all their revelations; not distinguishing between whether they are excluded from all participation in their ceremonies and whether they are expected to adopt any of their forms and symbols.

What is strictly and imperturbably guarded is the conviction imprinted upon them by an irreparable cruelty, suffered in their own land, that they, the most forlorn of all human races, must be abjured by the gods above, as they are by all their followers on earth.

They saw so many different nations living and flourishing under systems of worship, not only unlike one another but often utterly opposed and even in some cases irreconcilable enemies, that they could only become confirmed in the idea of each having its mysterious advocate and legislator on high; as revealed by the miracles, of which each religion had a supply in support of its dogmas, and as proved by their prosperous condition; whereas they, the Gipsies, had no one whom they might implore, since no superhuman power had ever intervened to help them in their struggles or to assist them to rise after defeat.

Living ever since their great catastrophe without even the remembrance of a primordial worship, without temple or altar, with no invocation to a god Creator, no expiatory sacrifice to a god Redeemer, no thanksgiving to a god Consoler, no act of religion, however rudimentary, which probably was in use amongst them before that time, how could they suppose a god allotted to them among all the god protectors of other men?

Arrived at such a conclusion as a consequence of their misfortunes they were without any divine rule of conduct. They had no hope beyond the grave, and neither regarded virtue as deserving reward, or crime as deserving punishment. How, under these circumstances, could these Paria-Bohemians escape a condition of radical immorality—of complete obliteration of the sense of right and wrong?

They could not, humanly speaking; and they did not.

"Lost we are and lost we shall remain" was their cry—at least, in effect. Their sacred patrimony is attachment to the race, a feeling combined of pride and sadness; but one which they would not exchange against any power, treatment, or well-being on earth. All these things appear contrary to their blood; to which they determine to remain true at any price.

The doctrine of the migration of souls is the only one which

has confusedly served in some slight degree for their consolation; and even that is too abstract for most of them; who, on seeing a corpse, cannot understand that anything appertaining to it can have survived.

A possibility worth mentioning however is that chiefs of the tribes may preserve an esoteric doctrine which they communicate only to the initiated; leaving the least gifted, the section standing to them in the relation of *plebs*, to pose before strangers as totally ignorant in order that the race may pass for being more bereft of intelligence and knowledge than it really is.

Thus, in accepting the situation of being classified outside humanity, they have settled down to a state of exile. The opprobrium levelled at them they changed into a complete divorce. The refusal of any right to property they changed into making everything their property whenever they chose so to adjudge it. Their relegation to a place outside the law they answer by taking success for law and ruse as its auxiliary. Their life has not been respected, nor have they respected the lives of others. They have been cast into the arms of Nature, and they have attached themselves to her with adoration and fanaticism.

Having learned of the many gifts which Nature had in store for those who look to her exclusively, they now have nothing but disdain for regular society; for they see how powerless it is to produce such magic and intense charms for the embellishment of misery and ignominy as those which they enjoy.

When we think of the unspeakable and age-long sufferings which have given rise to this state of feeling we cannot be surprised at the lack of scruple with which they take what may be necessary for their existence, from civilisations by which they have been treated so barbarously. One cannot, in fact, withhold a feeling of admiration for the grandeur and elevation of the human soul, that, after such terrible and prolonged degradation, it should still be able to draw from its unfathomable depths the instinct of its native force and dignity. It bewails its incapacity and protests against its weakness; but nevertheless finds within itself the genius which could alone translate its most beautiful impulses by the expressions of an admirable art.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Gipsies in Hungary.

1.—Their appearance in Hungary.

THE Bohemians in their course of taking water from any river and bread from any furrow happened to arrive one day (though that is a very long time ago) to unfurl their tents upon the same plains where the Magyars had already established themselves. These Magyars were also descended from a far-off race, from one in fact which might even have been related to that of the new-comers, and though they had, more than other victorious barbarians, adopted the noble Latin language of the Roman world for their official life, the manners and habits so beautifully represented by that language had had little effect upon them, and certainly less than upon the more Western European nations.

Few traces of Roman life had been found in the land they had appropriated and these had not led to anything like frequent intercourse with the capital of the empire.

This being the case, it is likely enough that some remembrance of their own migration may have been lingering in their minds—remembrance of the time when they also were wandering west and south, and when their own ancestors were as uncultivated as the new arrivals appeared to be.

However that may have been (and, as it is several centuries ago, one cannot be very certain about it) they do not seem to have exhibited any great repugnance to the Bohemians on account of their strangeness. They did not, as other nations have done, immediately proceed to measures of repression. It is even possible that the Bohemian's idea of liberty without restriction did not appear to them very difficult to understand.

Evidently deeming them on the whole to be inoffensive, they allowed their ever-moving tribes to be at peace and to remain free from molestation; whilst, on their part, the Bohemians, finding themselves at all events less tortured than elsewhere, and comparatively unworried by any vexatious measures, decided to fix themselves in a zone which might be called no more than slightly unfriendly.

In adopting this course, however, they took special care not to bring themselves within reach of any enactment or otherwise provoke interference with their habits, as well as to keep clear of all theocratic governmental or administrative conceptions; though they nevertheless remained absolutely recalcitrant to any suggestion involving association.

In this way they succeeded in remaining not only without causing any ill-will, but it might almost be said as friends with the earlier inhabitants; for though Hungary has always had its religious fanaticism and in it both police and social vanity are ever on the alert, no one appears to have disputed the tranquil enjoyment of Nature by the Bohemians, carried out in their own way. No malevolence came forward to blacken the nature of their vagabondage or to disturb them, all the while they did no harm to others.

As for the exceptional character of their relations with the rest of humanity, nobody cared; and thus it happened that for many years the Bohemians experienced neither need nor desire to quit the scene where there was evidently no wish to refuse them a place of dwelling.

2.—Their inducements to remain.

In addition to all this the Bohemians were attracted to Hungary and induced to remain there by its climate, rich and mild; having none of the tedious uniformity presented by some temperate regions; where the different seasons of the year are scarcely to be distinguished. In such countries the winter is never very cold or the summer very hot; whilst, as for spring and autumn, there seems no reason for their existence at all, except to fill up the pages of the almanack.

The Hungarian climate, whilst the luxuriant range of its

attractions includes all the extremes, has none of that violence and oppressiveness of character proper to polar or tropical countries; where terrible monotonies compress the soul during an interminable winter or summer. Yet the surface of this country is alternately covered with white splendours or dazzling sunshine according to the season, thus participating for a short time in the utmost beauties of far-off latitudes.

We cannot, in fact, forbear remarking the peculiar harmony and concordance which exists between the various traits of this Hungarian climate and those of the Bohemian temperament. The poetical transition from a sparkling rigorous winter to a burning electrical summer, separated by a spring full of juvenile suavity and re-united by an autumn gravely opulent, formed precisely the variety of extreme sensations and emotions which the Bohemian longs for with so much ardour.

In Hungary, therefore, all the particular impressions presented by extreme climates were available without enduring too long; and especially without excluding the transitions which contribute so much to the charm of each season, enhancing the effect by their arrangement of contrasts. This race, to whom contrast is such a life-essential, was here able to take in turn its fill of either heat or cold, light or shade, security or danger. It had neither to dread the desert sun, nor the attacks of ferocious beasts sheltered by the perfidious vegetation of equatorial climates; but, on the other hand, it was equally free from the mortal inaction and torpor unavoidable during the long boreal night.

The Bohemians accordingly revelled in the exercise of their temerity and the hardening of their constitutions during the snowy season; in order, with the incoming of June, to enjoy the sun and bask in his rays. Between whiles they had the periods of mist and rain, and, what they cherish most in Nature being the spectacle of her changes, they found themselves well placed in a country where these occurred in such profusion.

They were living amongst great plains and rivers, great forests and solitudes, mountains and hills, flocks and vines, profound retreats as well as populated cities, a brave people, poetic souls, gay temperaments, humorous spirits and compassionate hearts, and were therefore well content. Sometimes gay, sometimes a prey to mournful feelings, but always in the enjoyment of that easy independence which enabled them

to pass (as in their music) without preparation from passionate crisis to deepest melancholy.

Under the influence of this peculiar melancholy—peculiar as being vague and without cause—they could pass hours in watching the various scintillations of mica and quartz on the stones of the highway, or in contemplation of the shadows thrown by the clouds upon the grass of the meadows, until fatigued, they fell asleep.

When winter, like a tyrant, is at last put to rout by the spring equinox, it often leaves land inundated in many parts. These inundations, which are terrible in this country, devastate the neighbourhood of the river banks and spread terror far and wide. Many sheets of water present themselves in which the rays of the spring sun play joyously; as if they were immense Venetian mirrors in which diamonds from time to time were being reflected.

There the Bohemian is truly in his element, and its aspect seems to cause him to dance for sheer contentment.

When the exhalations of the steaming earth give the air a harsh sapidity and all the various echoes of human trouble are lost in the general jubilation attending the re-birth of Nature's productive forces; and when Nature is therefore releasing itself from the yoke which has so long suspended its activities like a proud young mother whose strength is again unfolding; then also is the Zigeuner in his glory. There will be found, deeply breathing in this new atmosphere, from which all sadness disappears in the same degree as the elements become unchained; probably reminding him of his own sadness becoming obliterated by the joy he finds in the contemplation of Nature.

But it is also essential to a knowledge of the Bohemian character to remember that he only identifies himself with these alternately mournful and radiant emotions for a time; afterwards throwing himself into a new period of apparent insensibility and a want of mental occupation outwardly resembling idiocy.

Thus, sauntering about the fir-groves in all directions, watching the effects of the setting sun upon the horizon, going rapidly about the fallow land without any apparent object are occupations which, during the time of depression, form for the Bohemian a pleasure of which he alone understands the consolation.

In summer-time these people, who seem as if they would never cease to be children, will gambol with one another in some verdant nook where the light plays through the tender foliage; or, maybe, from the top of some hillock they will amuse themselves counting the undulations of a wheat field when the wind is playing upon it, making it appear like a liquid surface of gold. Or they will watch the swallow on the look-out for niceties for its young; assuming that they do not prefer to contemplate the beautiful blue of the sky, and thus lose consciousness of self in watching reflections of the sunlight upon some stagnant pool.

Strangely enough these reflections beautifully symbolise how, by a compassionate ordination, the sentiment of the beautiful may also be reflected in a muddy soul—in the soul, that is, of the Zigano himself, who childishly deems his spirit to form part of Nature rather than of humanity.

3.—The birth of Gipsy music.

There, in Hungary, being less tormented and insulted than anywhere else, the Bohemians have profited by what we may call the "truce of God" to collect their impressions, and so far possess themselves of their faculties as to translate poetically the secret motives of their extravagant attachments—their race, their origin, their open-air life and communion with Nature.

In this favourable situation, being appeased by leisure without any attendant peril, by idleness without any necessary association with hunger, as well as by freedom from persecution for many generations, they have had good opportunity to meditate and allow their imaginations to poetise at ease; as also to encourage their instinctive impulses to take the form of inspiration of the kind necessary to give consistency to their dreams.

They could thus so well indulge their fancies, give free rein to their thoughts without the necessity of any particular subject, and review the whole range of their emotions, that their feelings became incorporated ethereally, and assumed a form the perfection of which resulted in a special art; in which both the indolent languors and the passionate effervescences of their soul were equally represented.

It is in this way that they learned to sing to themselves, to tell again to one another the history of their being, whilst at the same time and with mingled pride and sadness continuing to hide what traditions may still have lingered among them. At all events they always concealed the painful remembrance of expulsions and other bad treatment; though evidently not because they were ashamed of them, since they refused to efface their memory by becoming incorporated with more fortunate races; proudly determining to remain Parias—as they were.

The security thus enjoyed permitted them to sleep at ease and wander without fear in the shadow of the forests which Attila had invaded; without having to concentrate their attention on how to obtain food by fraud and trickery, and without being obliged to enshroud their lives in mystery as a protection against opprobrium, imprisonment, torture or death.

It was also the same security which gave them the possibility of addressing other men in a different language from that of want, and of not being in their presence always obliged to romance and cajole and pile up falsehood upon deception. From that time they were contented, though miserable; but being at peace, though with only the barest necessities, they thought of a humble but innocent way of obtaining a little coin—more innocent than the risky divinations of chiromancy, or the sharp practices of horse-jobbing.

It was accordingly a pleasure to them to charm those whose merciful kindness had enabled them to invent a means of escaping starvation without always having either to beg, cheat or steal. Their gratitude for this liberty, which was a thousand times more welcome to them than alms, took in its expression the poetically noble form of an offer to their benefactors of the beauties of their art in exchange for the comprehensive goodness they acknowledged.

Seeing the public moved and appreciative of the beauties they were able to express to it in their sublime artistic idiom, they fell to cultivating this means of pleasing themselves. They not only did this much better than the bear dance but their listeners were enchanted by the discourses made to them in such eloquent rhythms. The Bohemians were but painting their own feelings; but they did it so vividly that they themselves knew neither whence the ideas came nor whither they were tending. Surely enough they came straight from the

secret recesses of the human heart, created in the image of God; and mounted unconsciously to his throne, as everything finite passes to infinity and all time to eternity.

The melodies appertaining to this art included plaintive elegies of the kind which the human heart conceives when, with a sublime conception of perfect felicity, it experiences but a foretaste of such happiness; and the longing for more which is thus occasioned rises to a point of frenzy at a promise which appears to be never sustained. The applause of those who heard them seemed to them as the echo or reverberation of their own impressions, and enabled them to express the same feelings in a fashion still more exquisite; by bringing them objectively within the artist's reach as far as he requires in order to judge whether the form is adequate to the sentiment.

The more they sang the better they sang; and, the more they felt themselves understood, loved and fêted, the more they desired to succeed and actually did succeed in their art.

4.—The conditions of its development.

Art being reflexible in its nature only develops under conditions which reflect. It has never been, nor will it ever be, seen to unfold itself freely in our atmosphere without resonance. Its process of germination is only accomplished under the influence of a sympathetic fluidity between artist and public. Its growth proceeds on the firm assumption of its first principle being capable of multiplication to infinity, aided by the caressing rays of a friendly warmth.

In times and places which have been remarkable for a grand development of art, artists are frequently met with who, disdaining present success or esteem, and acclamations too easily obtained, have addressed themselves more to successors than contemporaries. They have done this either by choosing for their works themes unfamiliar to those around them, or in introducing new forms. Such forms by being adapted to a new ideal promote the progress of art by hastening its inevitable transformations.

But, before arriving at the period when its vitality is sufficiently strong to withstand the coldness and indifference arising from prejudice and ignorance, or the opposition arising

from hatred, art has to find a means of traversing the debilities of its infancy, and it can only do that by the fertile aid of appreciative sympathy. At this moment of its existence it resembles the sacred fig-tree of India; which only develops a rich vegetation if each branch with a downward inclination is enabled promptly to take root and become a parent-stem in its turn.

The soil is the human heart; and the productions of art are that symbolical forest in which all the trees are linked together by their upper branches, in order to provide by their living members a refreshing and delicious retreat to all hearts taking refuge there from consuming and sterilising influences.

No people or country can be effectively illuminated by the splendours of art unless, at the appearance upon a height of its first beacon, corresponding beacons immediately appear upon other summits. Art is not a parasitic vegetation, like the Aphides of Africa, to flower on any surface without root or soil or stem or even proper foliage. Art, which in the eyes of positivism is the most useless of all inutilities, requires a favourable combination of conditions before it can become acclimatised; as if amongst us it were an exotic plant, having its real home in superhuman regions.

But, as the Beautiful is the splendour of the True and the charm of the Good, it follows that, though heaven makes the great gift of Art to men, it does not do so to any one man; though it may endow an individual with the gift of creating —an approximative resemblance of its own All-power. The individual thus equipped with genius or talent, in clothing his sentiment either directly or in association with one idea, calls his work into existence out of nothing; as the Creator called the world in giving it its matter and form. But no work by any one man constitutes an art.

Each work produced depends upon those which have preceded it; just as, according to its value, it will command those which follow it; for Art is not the inheritance of any one individual; it is the patrimony of the people. Though it may abundantly nourish (where lips know how to taste its precious fruit), and though it may well console (where solitude of love is told to it in confidence), it can never be brought to being by the will of any individual. The individual may possess virtually in himself all the artistic faculties, but they evaporate unless joined by those of others.

The medium provided by the comprehension and enthusiasm of the body of mankind is necessary to art. It helps its progress and befriends it generally by receiving and communicating what inspiration and genius have confided to its care.

Unless a nation as a whole and an entire period endow an art with their material vivifying forces, all spasmodic attempts to give it life are bound to be unavailing.

5.—The helpfulness of Hungarian sympathy.

The Bohemian may live in common with others, but he is not of any society; and, in that sense, his existence is unsociable as well as being one of idleness. He is always absorbed to too great an extent in his own pride and his grief without immediate cause; or by his accidental joys and tricks (including the hazards attached to them), for him to be in a mood to identify himself with the sentiment of other people. He may express his own feeling as an artist, but he will not be able to assimilate that of another artist as listener. Having all his life blindly obeyed his first impulse, as Montaigne observes, he has no longer any but an affirmative capacity; having lost that of receptivity altogether.

Obviously, it would be impossible for him to understand emotions to which he is a stranger, such, for example, as those which civilisation produces in different varieties according to the character of the civilisation itself. Though various, however, these emotions can all be ranged under the common heading of "factitious passions"; because they all work more upon the ticklings of vanity than upon the impulses of pride; and promote the desire, often ferocious, of "appearing," to the distinct detriment of the genuine feeling.

The Bohemian would also not be able to understand sentiments expressed in a language which he does not speak and is not his own. All this is simple; but what is really strange is that he cannot seize in his own language, in that of his own art, the impressions of others; even when they are absolutely identical with his own.

To the Bohemian artist his own people were not sufficient public. He wanted an audience more reflective, more able than he was himself to give proper account of what should be

said or sung; in order to ensure that, after he had incarnated his sentiment in an artistic form, he should receive the electric stimulus to greater production. The Hungarians constituted for him that intelligent audience, without which Bohemian art would have been threatened with decay.

Hungarian civilisation did not show itself to them in the usual way; as a clumsy brutaliser, an ignorant spoiler or a rough executioner. It did not plume itself as towards the Bohemians, on any of those punctilious notions which seem to be spontaneously generated in some countries; as we are told is the case with certain worms.*

Hungarian sympathy permitted these artists from nowhere to go from district to district, from town to town, and from house to house, giving them everywhere a friendly welcome; and showing, by the generosity of their rewards, how charmed and astonished the vigorously accentuated poetry of the Bohemians had caused them to be.

It was in reality the Bohemian Epopœia which they were chanting in Hungary, unconsciously and in the same manner as, we are told that, in Greece, the rhapsodes once chanted the poems of Homer. As in Greece, so in Hungary no one would have dared to shut his door to one of these wandering minstrels. They were welcome at the cottage home and at the palace. They were as necessary for the wedding at the village-inn as for the festivals of kings and princes. The rich did not hide from them the spectacle of their splendours, as if they thought their glance contaminating. Their treasures were exhibited freely; the Bohemians being admitted to view the magnificence of national luxury in all its seductions.

Baron de Pronay, president of the Conservatoire of Pesth, speaking of their popularity among the Hungarian peasants, says that it was such that the brilliancy of their weddings was

* Hungary is the only nation of Europe which has not, so to speak, classed the Gipsy outside humanity. In a country where each class had its privileges the Bohemians also had theirs. King Sigismond, in 1423, granted them a magistrate to be taken from their own body; and later on it was that great dignitary the Palatin himself who had to choose their first head. ("Hungary and Wallachia," by Thouvenel.) It is easy to understand however that this choice of a magistrate and designation of a chief had scarcely any practical signification; being more of the nature of a token of recognition, a legal and explicit acknowledgment of the Bohemian's right to be, and his authorisation to remain in Hungary.

estimated according to the number of Gipsy musicians which attended it; as the village method of displaying luxury always sought expression in the greater grandeur of the concert.

Allowing for a great difference in the scale, it was the same principle at the balls given by the great lords. With them it was no longer a question of musicians to form an orchestra, but of several orchestras called from different towns and rivalling one another.

It is clearly therefore to the Hungarian's sympathetic intuition of the value of their art that the Bohemians owe the opportunity of carrying it amongst them to its most flourishing condition.

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